December 1915

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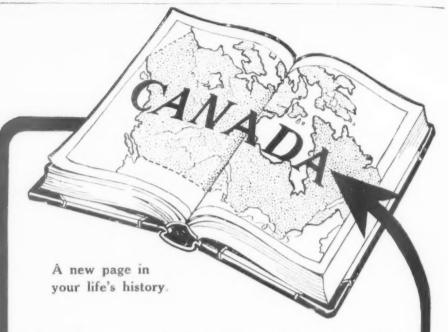


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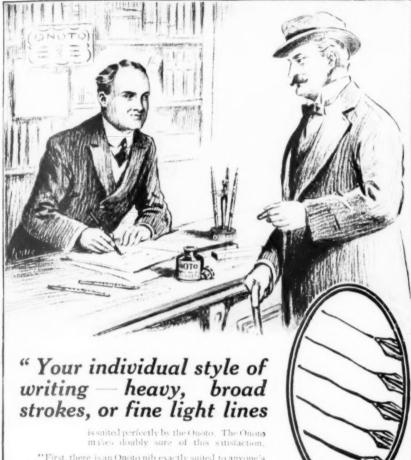
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So numerous have been the applications for the Personal Home Test of Mr. Edwards' wonderful "Kair-Drill" method of hair-growing that a large staff has been kept working at high pressure. Notwithstanding this, he has decided to keep the offer open for a day or two, so earnest is his desire to save the men and women of Britain from paying the heavy penalty for Hair Scantiness.

Refore

Treatment

Astounding! Such, in a word, has been the public's reception of the reports of Mr. Edwards' experiments in Hair Culture, which, accompanied by an offer of Free Personal Home Tests of his wonderful hair-growing method, appeared recently in the Press.

It is striking evidence that the people are beginning to realise what a handicap, in business and social life, grey or falling hair is. It is evident, however, to Mr. Edwards -his life-work has been the successful treatment of all forms of hair trouble-that there is still an appalling

number of men and women in the country whose hair is the reverse of healthy, and on their behalf he again reprints brief particulars of his experiments and keeps his offer of free "Hair-Drill" Outfits open.

REMARKABLE HAIR-GROWING FACTS.

The sketches here trace the results of the treatment by the "Har-lene Hair-Drill" method human hair, though it may be said that the different animals called into use and the various forms of hair disorder treated during the experiments were numerous.

The following interesting and valuable facts were brought to light:

1st Day.

There is absolutely no need for the "too-old-at-

(1) There is absolutely no need for the "too-old atforty" fear, for hair can be grown at any age.
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IMPORTANT!

A little thought, whether you are man or woman, and you will realise that a head of healthy, luxuriant hair is a prize worth gaining, or, if you already possess it, worth retaining. Mr. Ed-wards asks you to let him help you in either direction. But you must apply without delay.

POST THE FORM TO-DAY.

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Not content with having established facts, Mr. Edwards wishes all who realise the importance of hair luxuriance and beauty to test his method of securing it. Thousands have already done so, reaping immediate benefit, and all who have not should apply at once, as the offer may close

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(1) A trial bottle of "Harlene," which for over 25 years has been inducing Hair Health and repelling Hair Disease.

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of which for only 2
minutes a day will
effectively bring back our youthful appear-



unce. Women sending for the free "Harlene Hair-Drill" Gift will quickly see how to enhance the luxuriant appearance of their hair and give it such vitality that it will seem charged with hidden sunshine. Men, too, will find that "Harlene" will enable them to brighten and smarten

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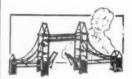
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THE KING OF GAMES.

HI3 delightful game," says an ancient chronicler of the charm of billiards-and his words have echoed down the years. Golf is often spoken of as the "Royal and ancient game," but billiards is certainly as Royal, and decidedly more ancient. Indeed the origin of the game of billiards is lost in the mis s of antiquity. Its exact age is as doubtful as the birthplace of Homer or the problem of the Sphinx.

IMPORTED FROM PERSIA?

Some historians suppose billiards to have been imported into the Roman Empire from Persiaand that surely is quite a respectable antiquity. From all accounts however the game as originally known died out with the Roman Empire, and when many centuries later it reappeared in France during the reign of one of the Henrys, it was very much improved. It is on record that that king commissioned a billiard table with a bed of stone covered with cloth having a hole and

HAZARD POCKET IN THE CENTRE.

The monarchs of France indeed were ever devotees of Billiards. Mary Queen of Scots was a passionate lover of the game and a passage in a letter she wrote prior to her execution refers to "her billiard table being taken away from her." The Empress Josephine played billiards with Napoleon and it is said the mo dy conqueror never appeared more happy than when engaged in the game.

Coming down to later times it is interesting to quote the opinion of a once very celebrated London

Surgeon who expressed himself to the following effect-"We should all sleep more soundly if we made it a rule to play billiards for an hour or two each evening before going to bed. Our wives and children would benefit too-they would be at all events more fond of home, for there is nothing that so endears the family circle as the recollection

AMUSEMENTS SHARED IN COMMON

games in which we all take part." Billiards today is constantly increasing the number of its followers and there is no doubt much justification for the claims of those enthusiasts who describe it as the most accomplished, fascinating, and absorbing game in existence. The great feature which makes billiards the really ideal game for the home is this: that it will admit of being enjoyed in common by

ALL MEMBERS OF THE FAMILY

circle-parents, sons and daughters, even to the youngest. There was an objection at one time that Billiards was a rich man's game only. This is not so to-day however. Billiard tables are now made in smaller sizes, while at the same time they retain all the characteristics of the larger tablesslate bed, rubber cushions, etc., etc., and are built in exact proportion to the larger size tables. Good judges declare that just the same skill is needed to play on these tables, and quite as good and as interesting a game can be had on them. Undoubtedly the best makers are E. J. Riley Ltd., of Accrington, Lancs., whose fame is world-wide,

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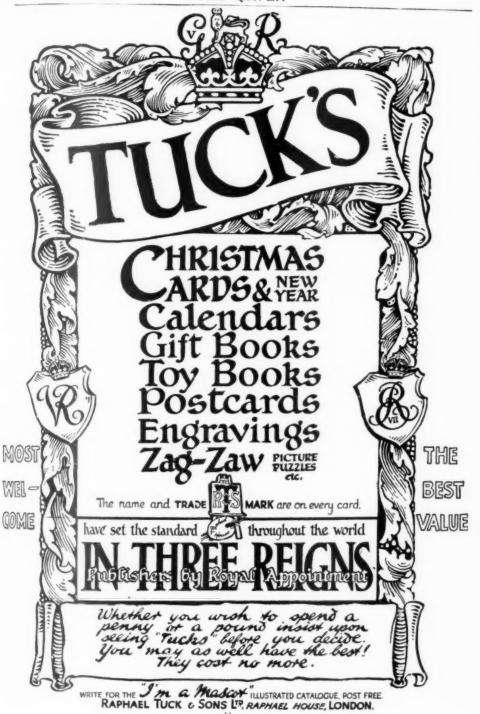
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despair at the time; I am now thankful to say I am stronger than ever; insomnia has vanishof completely (work is a joy and no longer an effort. I am conscious of a greater mental power than

Yours truly, (Rev.) W. S. AIRV,

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Belt I have no skeepless inghts such as
Levetinesed for quite a year before I
came to you about eight years ago,
the tool unjul I wore one of your

mitural, refreshing step, which I have empired ever size. If your readers shull it, tell them to one and see me. J. E. Smith. Africa. 1, 1913.

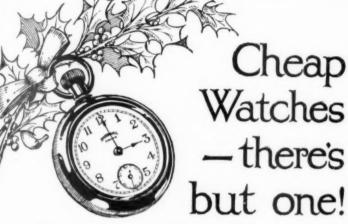
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Vours truly, G. H. RICKEARD, May 5, 1913.





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Nine Years' Acute Suffering from Nervous Indigestion.

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For no less than nine years this lady endured torture. She was unable to retain any kind of food on her stomach. Yet she is in the most perfect health to-day. Surely here is a wonder—or would be, did we not know the power of Dr. Cassell's Tablets. But let Mrs. Hammond tell her own story. She says:—"I can never express how much I owe Dr. Cassell's Tablets. I was positively at death's door, wasted to a shadow, and so utterly helpless that I could hardly move at all.

"For nine years this had gone on, and though I had been to Doctors, had taken endless Doctors' medicine, and also attended hospital, I could find no relief. From the first onset I was never free from Indigestion, which became so severe that I dreaded food. Every morsel I ate caused me

forturing pain in my chest right through to my back.

"It was as though something were being screwed into my body, and no ease could I get until I had thrown up all I had eaten. Naturally I wasted away till I had no strength at all. I only wished to be left alone to brood over my misery. I would lie on a couch, even on the hearth-rug for hours, utterly exhausted. My head ached frightfully, and there was a mazy feeling always present, as though things were swimming round me. At night the bed seemed to rock and sway under me. I was badly constituted too. I became terribly depressed. I used to hold my head



Mrs. Hammond, Newport.

constipated, too. I became terribly depressed. I used to hold my head with both hands, and just long to scream, I was so utterly, hopelessly miserable. I felt sure my end was near, and I hardly cared. But about three months ago a friend got me some Dr. Cassell's Tablets. It seems miraculous, yet it is true, that after the first few doses I felt better, and from that time I have steadily progressed. To-day I am as strong and well as ever in my life."

Dr.

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These are no exceptional cases: similar cures are being effected daily by Dr. Cassell's Tablets. The wonderful power of Dr. Cassell's Tablets to cure nervefulure, stomach and kidney weakness, and general vital exhaustion, in old or young, makes them the surest remedy ever devised for

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SUFFERING FROM

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ON SEEING HOW

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WOULD BE GLAD TO ACCEPT YOUR

Mr. T. C., of Tooting, has just written:—"I recently suffered very much from Gastric Catarrh or Stomach Indigestion. I was finally given medicine and advised not to cat meat, potatoes, or vegetables, but to live entirely on milk puddings and such-like.

"I did this for some time, and I must say I was eased, but that was all-I was not cured.

"On reading your advertisement I felt I must try Cicfa. After taking your free sample and a tube (large size) I am completely cured of my allment, for which I am most thankful, and I would recommend Cicfa to all sufferers of chronic Indigestion pains.

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scatements. He saw that scientific REASONS wer given as to why Ciefa cured Indigestion, and the Indigestion may be in the Stomach or Bowel or both.

No other advertisement had ever contained this incommence the contained that are contained this incommence the contained that are contained that are incincing about Indigenion was so superior to all others, it was probable that the remedy offered was equally superior. As he had tried nearly everything else, he knew that unless it was unlike all the other remedies it could not be a superior of the contained that the co

cure him.

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Go to the nearest chemist to-day and get a box of Holloway's Pills; they will cure you, as they have cured others. Price 1/13, 2,9, 4/6.







See page xx

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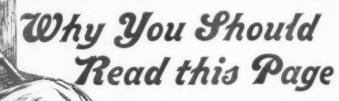
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I can ever promi to brown you find my on booms find so area is some by took the first doe of Ourrow of trans and the powering of mary braining on talkings his conference of talking.

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A LETTER FROM THE EDITOR.

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During the year now closing you have contributed liberally to the Charities mentioned in "The Quiver." But still the needs are very great.

May I earnestly commend to your sympathetic consideration the claims of the Societies mentioned in the following pages? They have been carefully selected, and are most worthy of your support.

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The Editor



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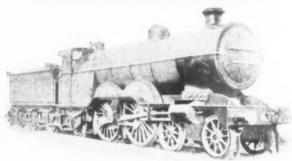
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CONTENTS FOR DECEMBER, 1913

Frontispiece: "The Christmas Party." Drawn by Balliol Salmon	
Wanted-A Friend. Complete Story. By J. J. Bell. Illustrated by H. M. Brock .	PAGE 93
The Censored Mistletoe. Complete Story. By Winifred Graham. Illustrated by Balliol Salmon	103
The Merry Old City Christmas. By Frank Elias. Illustrated by Wal Paget	111
Unawares. Complete Story. By J. T. Dickinson. Illustrated by John E. Sutcliffe	117
Sharing the Manger. A Christmas Meditation. By the Rev. RICHARD ROBERTS	129
Can the Dead Live? Complete Story. By Helen Wallace. Illustrated by John Cameron	133
NATURE'S CALENDAR. By G. CLARKE NUTTALL, B.Sc. With Nine Illustrations. Photographed in Colour Direct from Nature by H. Essenhigh Corke, F.R.P.S., F.R.H.S.	145
CORRODING GOLD. Serial Story. By Annie S. Swan. Chapters IV.—VI.	173
My Dream Newspaper. By John Foster Fraser. With Portrait	193
Christmas at Bailey's. Complete Story. By Oswald Wildridge. Illustrated by Warwick Reynolds.	197
THE HOME DEPARTMENT:— The Christmas Larder. By Blanche St. Clair	205
How the Royal Children of Europe Keep Christmas. By Sarah A. Tooley.	209
John Gaynor's Dream. Complete Story. By DAVID LYALL. Illustrated by Dudley Tennant	216
Peace hath Her Victories: A Gold Medal for Heroes. By The Editor	224
Beside the Still Waters	225
THE BEAUTY-MAKER. Long Complete Story. By MARY BRADFORD WHITING.	227
Companionship Pages. Conducted by "Alison"	257
Help in Shopping. A New Department to Assist Readers	261
The Crutch and Kindness League, By the Rev. J. REID HOWATT	263
Lesson Material. Sunday School Pages. By the Rev. RICHARD ROBERTS	265
The Women's Work Bureau. Businesses that can be Worked from Home, By "WINIFRED".	267

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THE LEAGUE OF LOVING HEARTS

By THE EDITOR

THERE is only a week between Christmes and the New Year—and that week is not one for charitable distributions! In other words, if we are going to bring up the League funds to last year's total, it will have to be done by Christmas, or very soon after, for on December 31 the books are made up, and the funds distributed between the ten societies.

I notice that a number of members have not yet renewed their subscriptions for the present year. May I ask such to send me their shilling—or more—before they are immersed in Christmas preparations?

To readers generally I make an urgent Christmas appeal to send me a thank-offering to help to maintain the work of these ten splendid institutions:

DR. BARNARDO'S HOMES, Stepney Causeway, E. RAGGED SCHOOL UNION, 32 John Street, Pheobaid's Road, W.C. Cherch Army, 55 Bryanston Street, W. Salvation Army (Social Work), Queen Victoria Street, E.C. Miss Agnes Weston's Work, Royal Sailors' Rest, Portsmouth. The UTEFR'S Hospital for Chilippen, Harkney Road, Bethnal Green, E. London City Mission, 3 Bridewell Place, E.C. Ordhan Working School, 73 Cheapside, E.C. Cherch of England Society for Providing Homes for Wales and Strays, Old Town Hall, Kennington Road, S.E. British Home and Hospital for Incurables, 72 Cheapside, E.C.

Contributions for religious and philanthropic societies may be sent to The Editor, THE QUIVER, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.



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Very "faddy" with his food Was Mr.—, well, let's call him "A." He shrank from eating, and his meals They simply bored him, in a way. The Chef's most wonderful creation Merely made him take to flight; But 'Jelloids,' happy inspiration! Soon found for him his appetite.

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". Thank you so much for asking me, she stammered. '1 shall never forget your kindness." Sec "The Censored Mistletoe."

Drawn by
Ravial Salman.



QUIVER



VOL. XLIX., No. 2

DECEMBER, 1913

WANTED-A FRIEND

CHRISTMAS · NUMBER

The Story of a Lonely Man

By J. J. BELL

1

AT last Mr. Henry Limber, sole surviving partner of the old-established legal firm, Limber and Limber, was back at business. His illness had been serious, his convalescence slow.

On his reappearance the office staff—a small one, for Limber and Limber's practice was of the snug rather than the extensive sort—observed great changes in the old man, but none in his manner. That was as stern and forbidding as ever.

Thomas Snigg, the confidential clerk, felt his heart sink. To all intents and purposes he had carried on the business singlehanded during his employer's absence. He was not conscious of having committed any serious blunders, yet from long experience he knew with what severity the slightest mistakes would surely be criticised. smallish man, with soft brown hair turning grey, soit brown eyes, very eager and faithful, and a soft expression of countenance, was Thomas Snigg. But you must not misread these outward signs. The man's character was gentle, but not weakly; modest more than humble, patient rather than timid. And his brain was as alert and capable as most.

On this particular occasion his heart sank, not because he was abjectly afraid, but simply because it hurt to be reprimanded by the man for whose business qualities he

cherished the most profound admiration and respect.

For the first few days of his return Mr. Limber kept to his private room and demanded little attention from the office. He was not yet equal to seeing clients, he informed the confidential clerk; in the meantime he would recapture the threads that he had, perforce, let go so suddenly three months previously. To facilitate this, Thomas had drawn up in minute detail an account of his stewardship. It included one or two items which Thomas had set down with some misgiving, and the memory of which plagued him from morning till night.

On the evening of the fourth day Mr. Limber remained at business later than he had yet done. The junior clerks had just gone, and Thomas was becoming a little anxious for his employer's health, when the bell of the private room rang in its usual curt fashion. Thomas hastened to obey the summons, but now his anxiety was on his own account. He surmised that Mr. Limber had at last completed his perusal of that lengthy report and was ready to pronounce judgment upon it and its compiler. And, sure enough, on entering the private room, he beheld the report on the desk in front of the lawyer.

"Shut the door, Snigg," said Mr. Limber, "Sit down." He pointed to the chair on

the other side of the consulting table. "Read that." He thrust across a couple of sheets of foolscap, disfigured by his own clumsy writing.

Thomas took them, laid them before him, and blinked his eyes. "This," he said to himself, "is a list of the things I've done wrong." Then, checking a sigh, he began to read.

Mr. Limber unfolded the report and, to all appearances, became absorbed in it. At any rate, he paid no heed to the sudden gasp of his confidential clerk or to the halfchoked exclamation of "Oh, sir!" that followed.

Rubbing his eyes, Thomas resumed reading the quivering sheet in fearful yet fascinated fashion; on coming to the last line his feelings again overcame him.

"Mr. Limber, can you really mean this?" he whispered.

"Have you finished?" asked Mr. Limber, without looking up.

"Not yet, sir. But I scarcely dare to read more."

"Finish!" said the other, making an impatient movement,

With a long breath, Thomas took up the second sheet, which was only partially written on. When he had come to the end he sat silent for nearly a minute. Then:

"Mr. Limber, this is too much," he said huskily.

Mr. Limber was still apparently absorbed

in the report. "Do you agree?" he asked absently.

"Agree? Oh, sir!" Thomas barely restrained his emotion,

"Very well. Get the matter put into proper shape, and we'll sign it to-morrow." Mr. Limber looked up suddenly. "The tact is, Snigg, this ought to have been done long ago. The only advantage of an illness is that it gives one time to think. This is not a reward I offer you: it is only your due, I regret it should be so belated."

"But, sir—Mr. Limber—I never looked for such a thing."

" I am well aware of that."

"But it is too much. Not the partnership in itself, for I have the firm's interests so entirely at heart that I may hope to merit my advancement. But your generous compliment in offering to after the style of the firm that has stood for a century as 'Limber and Limber' to 'Limber and Snigg'—oh, Mr. Limber, I say it is too much!"

Mr. Limber rose, His countenance came as near to smiling as it had done in thirty years. "The new style appeals to me as — as smarter than the old one. You might give orders for a new brass plate and for repainting the glass door. Yes; I like the new style—'Limber and Snigg.'" Abruptly he held out his hand.

A moment or two later, Thomas, having blown his nose and cleared his throat, said, with some dignity:

" It is of small importance, perhaps, but

a fact, nevertheless, that Queen Elizabeth once employed a certain Thomas Snigg—spelt with a final 'e'—in the clerical work of her royal household."

"Indeed!" The old man looked slightly amused.

"And I have some reason to hope that I am a descendant of that Thomas Surge. I have gone into the





"'Mrs. Tolley,' he said with difficulty,
"I-er-this is Christmas Eve, isn't it?"-p. 96.

Deman by

matter pretty thoroughly, and before long I trust—" Here Thomas stopped short in confusion, "I'm sure I beg your pardon, Mr. Limber, I'm afraid I lost my head for the moment."

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"I shall be interested to hear the result of your genealogical investigations, Snigg," said the other pleasantly, reaching for his overcoat. "By the way, you must dine with me as soon as my doctor gives me permission to eat anything worth eating. Meantime, he has ordered me to Bournemouth for a few weeks, and I shall go there to-morrow as soon as the deed of co-partnery is signed. I hope you won't have too much to do. You are due a holiday."

"You have made me feel equal to anything, sir; and to-morrow, you know, is Christmas Eve, so I shall have at least a couple of days to get over this surprise and excitement," Mr. Snigg laughed softly, feeling the proudest and happiest man in the world,

When he had assisted Mr. Limber into the overcoat, he insisted on fetching a cab, just

as he would have done when he was officeboy, just as he would do in the future should the senior partner have no one else to perform the service. Then, having seen Mr. Limber drive off, he returned to the office to read again—and again—the draft of the tremendous document.

It was not until the next afternoon, however, that he quite realised what had happened to him. The copies of the deed making him a partner had been signed and sealed; Mr. Limber had departed for Bournemouth; the clerks had closed their desks a couple of hours earlier than usual, offered their congratulations, and gone, each to his holiday-making, cheered by unexpected gifts from the new firm of Limber and Snigg. Altogether it had been a stirring day for Thomas.

He lingered in the shabby room, which was shortly to be re-furnished in a style be-fitting a member of the firm. It was all so amazing. His income had suddenly jumped from one hundred and fifty to at least seven hundred a year; his name, hitherto a mere

distinguishing label, as it were, was become all at once prominent and important.

"My goodness! just to think of it!" he muttered to himself, smiling softly. "'Limber and Snigg'—'Limber and Snigg'! What will people say?"

He chuckled as he donned his coat and hat; he chuckled as he made a final round of the office in his old methodical way; he chuckled as he stepped out and locked the door. "What will people say?"

He chuckled as he descended the dimly-lit stone stair to the street; he chuckled as he unfurled his umbrella, for rain was falling. "My goodness! Just to think of it! Limber and Snigg—that's me! What will people say?"

And in the same breath his chuckle died; the light went out of his face. It was as though something vividly disappointing had sprung into his sight. He paused, and unconsciously sought the support of the wall. And presently his hip gave a little univer.

For in all London—the truth smote him—there was not one person who cared twopence whether Thomas Sugg rose or fell; not one to whom he could relate the wondrous tale of his sudden advancement with the slightest expectation of winning a glad smile or a heartfelt tear.

And it was Christmas Eve.

II

TWELVE years ago the girl to whom Thomas was engaged had "changed her mind." A year later Thomas's sister and only near relation, who kept house for him, had married and with her husband emigrated to New South Wales. The first event transformed him from a sociable fellow into a stay-at-home; the second made a recluse of him. He was not a soured man by any means, nor did he shun the world because he hated or despised it. He simply accepted loneliness for his portion and allowed solitude to become a habit. Fortunately he had found a hobby.

While overhauling, in the course of business, a chest of ancient documents belonging to a certain estate, he chanced upon a parchment containing his own name (spelt with a final "e"). This led him to take an interest in his own descent which had hithertonever given him a thought. Thenceforth

his spare time was entirely occupied by genealogical research in libraries, museums, and old registers in various parts of the country, all to the end that he might connect himself with the Thomas Snigge who had been a scribe or clerk to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth. It was truly amazing to find how many Sniggs there had been who had never done anything to merit the most moderate fame. Still, the collecting of their names and the dates of their births, marriages and deaths provided a hobby for the lonely man, and a fair-sized "Book of Sniggs" might have resulted had not the lonely man been so abruptly and forcibly reminded of his loneliness.

Certainly, on this Christmas Eve, the only Snigg that mattered to Thomas was himself. "Ah, well," he sighed, stepping out into the rain, "I suppose it's my own fault. I dropped my friends deliberately. I chose to be alone, and—and Heaven knows I am

Half an hour later he sat down to tea in his rather dingy lodgings. His landlady was a solemn and taciturn creature, for which very reason she had earned and retained his approval until this evening. But now her grave silence, as she set a boiled egg before hum, annoyed him. Yet it is possible that she was just a product of lonchness like himself. "Mrs. Tolley," he said, ere she could

Without a word she re-entered the room. She peered inquiringly at the table, No; she had not forgotten anything. Then she peered inquiringly at her lodger.

"Mrs. Tolley," he said with difficulty,
"I er this is Christmas Eve, isn't it?"

Mrs. Tolley looked slightly—very slightly—astonished. "I believe so," she murmured. At this time of day it never occurred to her to inquire whether he would be at home on the morrow. As a matter of fact, she had already ordered a chop for his Christmas dinner.

Thomas began to pour the tea-a good deal of it into the saucer. She moved towards the door,

" Mrs. Tolley."

close the door.

"Sir?" She stopped and waited, with obvious patience.

"Um er a somewhat interesting event er took place in the City to-day." Thomas hesitated.

"Oh, indeed?" murmured Mrs. Tolley.

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"The man, hanging his head, shrank back another pace "-p 99.

Drawn by M. M. Brock.

"The fact is—was—that I—well, I may tell you, Mrs. Tolley, that I am now a p-partner of the firm of Limber and Limber—I should say Limber and Snigg." Thomas forced himself to sit an inch higher and look at her.

"Oh, really," murmured Mrs. Tolley, and sighed. "My late 'usband were once a partner of a firm in the City—for five weeks. And then it all busted up."

"Oh!" involuntarily exclaimed Thomas.

"That—that's all at present, thank you,
Mrs. Tolley."

Without a sound Mrs. Tolley went out.

Presently Thomas pushed away his egg, unopened. It is almost certain that he had

tears in his eyes then.

When he had eaten a piece of toast and drank a cup of tea he rose and went over to the cupboard where reposed his records of the Snigg family. For a few moments he regarded them, fingered one or two of the notebooks containing his most recent "discoveries," then he turned away without disturbing anything. His interest in the Sniggs of the past seemed as dead as they. With empty hands he seated himself in the wicker easy-chair by the hearth. There he brooded till the clock struck seven, when he rose abruptly, rang the bell, and went out into the passage.

"Mrs. Tolley, I am going out."

Mrs. Tolley received the announcement in silence, and stood aside for him to pass.

"Do you know whether it is still raining?" he inquired, desperate for a few words of conversation.

"I could not say," murmured Mrs. Tolley, and retired to her own quarters.

He went out; yet when he had closed the door behind him he remained on the step, uncertain.

"Where shall I go?" he said under his breath. "Where shall I go?"

Ш

THE rain had ceased; stars were dimly visible; there was a hint of frost in the air.

At the end of five minutes Thomas stepped down to the pavement. As he did so he recollected that he had a month's salary in his pocket. He was less careful of his own than of other people's money; still, he half-turned towards the door, thinking to deposit the gold in the old-fashioned strongbox that served him for a bank. He had not saved religiously during the last ten years, though he had lived frugally enough. Occasional gifts to his sister in New South Wales had accounted for most of his surplus, Nevertheless, the strong-box just then contained something like a hundred and twenty pounds in sovereigns.

But he did not return to the house, "No," he said to himself, "if I go back I'll not have the courage to come out again. Be-

sides, I'm a rich man now."

Ten minutes' walking brought him to a terrace of more prosperous appearance than the street in which he lived. With trepidation he rang the bell of No. 14. Long ago one of his closest friends, the son of the house, had often welcomed him there,

"Is—is Mr. Robert Finlay at home?"
The maid stared, then shook her head.
"Nobody of that name here," she said.

" Bright's the name."
Thomas turned away.

"P'r'aps you've got the wrong number," the girl called after him. "There's the postman coming. Better ask him."

With a word of thanks, Thomas proceeded to meet the postman. The man was heavily laden and tired, but he listened patiently enough to the inquiries.

"Yes, sir; I remember the name. But it's fully seven years since they left. Made a pile of money and went off to Kensington, I believe."

"Ah, thank you," muttered Thomas.

"Welcome," said the other, moving on.
"Stay!" cried Thomas, fumbling in his pocket. He put a half-crown in the postman's hand, and hastened away.

"Why, sir, I'm much obliged. Merry Christmas, sir," came after him; but he found himself unable to make any response.

Robert Finlay had been his first and last hope. There was no one else in the neighbourhood he could remember as an old friend—no one who would care to hear his great news.

He walked on and on without regard to direction, through quiet streets and busy, by familiar ways and strange. In some streets shopping was proceeding briskly, and he had to slow his pace in passing through gay, animated throngs. It came to him suddenly that scarcely any of the people were without companions. It hurt

WANTED-A FRIEND

him that of all those thousands of smiling faces not one should smile at him.

"I'm nobody—just nobody," he said to

But not everyone was happy. There were men and women and children who stood in the gutter offering things for a penny, singing, or frankly begging. Still remembering he was rich, Thomas gave to them. He was sorry for them, but sorrier for himself. His heart did not warm at their

thanks. By making a small purchase in a stationer's shop he procured change for a couple of sovereigns, and punctuated the rest of his journey with little charities.

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He found himself Street. Regent and abruptly realised what a long way he had come. He also realised that he was tired, that he had been walking for nearly two hours. Most of the shops in the fashionable thoroughfare had closed some time ago, but there was still much traffic on the pavement. And once more Thomas felt himself alone among his fellows.

Still remembering

he was rich, he decided to take a cab home. The loneliness of his dingy sitting-room was nothing to the loneliness of these thronged streets. From the edge of the pavement he gave the signal shyly, awkwardly.

As the taxicab came to rest, a man who had been selling matches a little way down the street darted forward and opened the door. For such an occupation the man was fairly decently attired. His poverty was chiefly in his countenance.

Thomas gave the driver the direction, then put his hand in his pocket. He was debating whether he ought to give the man a sixpence or a shilling, when, with a quick gasp and muttering a name, the man drew back as if about to flee.

Thomas started—for the muttered name was his own—and peered. "You know me?" he asked, wondering.

The man, hanging his head, shrank back another pace. But by doing so he stepped from the shadow of the cab into the cold electric light.

"Oh!" whispered Thomas. "Not Finlay!"

"Let me go," said the man. "If I had recognised you at first, I'd never—"

Stepping forward, Thomas took the man by the arm, drew him back to the cab, and said very softly: "Get in, Finlay."

"No, no. Let me

"Get in. I've been looking for you."

In the midst of his astonishment—nay, stupefaction, Finlay allowed himself to be pushed into the cab.

During the long ride that followed neither man spoke many words.

Said Finlay after several minutes:

"Where are you taking me?"
"Home."

There was a pause, and Finlay spoke again. "I—I ought to be selling my matches. . . . I've a wife

and three children-hungry."

"I didn't know," stammered Thomas,
"I shan't keep you long." For the life of
him he could not command his voice. This
man beside him—this poor seller of matches
—had been the admiration of his youth, the
envy of his early manhood, the pride of all
his friendships. Nothing—no, not even the
shattering of his love's romance—had ever
shocked the soul of Thomas as this strange
meeting had done. Speech was beyond
him. Nevertheless, his mind was working.





"In the glow of the dying fire, Mrs. Tolley sat at the kitchen table, sobbing quietly."

Drawn by H. M. Broch.

IV

"GO in," he said hoarsely, holding open the house door. He guided his guest into the sitting-room, and turned up the peep of gas, almost as if he feared the light. "Sit down, Bob." The old familiar name slipped out. "No; take the easy chair. Warm yourself."

Finlay did as he was told, like a man in a dream.

Thomas felt as though he had contracted a sore throat. "You're hungry," he croaked. "I'll get you something to eat at once."

The other, without raising his head, said:
"Let me take the food away with me."

"Yes, yes; you shall take plenty of food away with you. But first—"

"First," said Finlay, " and before you do anything for me, you had better hear—" "No, no; not now."

"I made an awful mess of things. I — "But Thomas was out of the room. He

had never yet entered the kitchen; but now, perceiving no light under the door and deeming his landlady to have retired, he stepped boldly in to forage for provisions.

And behold! in the glow of the dying fire, Mrs. Tolley sat at the kitchen table, her face in her arms, sobbing quietly.

Aghast he cried: "Mrs. Tolley, what is the matter?"

Within the next sixty seconds Mrs. Tolley uttered more words in her lodger's hearing than she had done during the last six days.

"I'm sure it's nothing to you, sir; but I couldn't help thinking about what you said when you was at your tea, and I'm sure I wish you joy in being a partner, sir, though my late 'usband' ad little enough; but when I come to think of myself, I says to myself, now that 'e's come into 'is own, as it were, 'e'll be removing to more commojus premises, so to speak, and I'll never get another gentleman like him, so quiet and respectable and so thoughtful of a female's feel-

ings, and never mistrusted her nor counted the heggs 'e 'ad; and I'm sure I don't blame him for wanting to make a change, though 'e 'as been 'ere for nine years and three-quarters, and I'm sure I've done my best and——"

"Mrs. Tolley," said Thomas, at last grasping the situation, and mopping his brow, "it is too soon to talk of changes. But—but I promise you, if any change is made in my address, I shall still want you to be my landlady—on your own terms. But now "—some firmness came into his voice—"I require your help."

He told her as much as he thought necessary, and presently, as such women will do, she rose to the occasion.



The hungry man had been fed. There was colour in his face now—yet how much of it was the flush of shame? He rose.

"I don't know what to say," he stammered, "but I must tell you the truth about myself before I go. I'm net fit—"

"Sit down, Bob, sit down," said Thomas soothingly. "You can tell me what you will another time. But there isn't time now. You must be going back to your wife and children. Tell me one thing, though. Are you—is your house—your home—is it——"He halted in embarrassment.

"We have a room—an awful place." Finlay hung his head. "But this is the first night I've actually stood in the gutter."

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"That's all I want to know, Bob. Don't speak." Thomas went over to the cupboard, a bunch of keys in his hand.

"There is one thing I must tell you," said Finlay. "You know my wife. . . . She was Clarice Johnson."

Behind the door of the cupboard Thomas winced, and there was a silence.

"I was afraid you might not have heard," Finlay resumed. "It was a bad day for her....."

He was interrupted by the quiet voice from behind the door, saying: "Then I have found two old friends to-night, Bob."

A moment later Thomas came back to the table. He carried an old cigar-box. He spoke like a man asking a favour,

"A taxi is waiting out there. I wish you to take it to your—to where you live, and bring your wife and children back with you. My landlady happens to have a neighbour

with rooms to let. They shall be ready for you by the time you return. Some of the shops are sure to be open for an hour or so yet, and your wife can buy what she requires on the way back. Not provisions: my landlady will see to that. And this——"

Finlay's face was in his hands, "Tom," he whispered, "I can't accept such kindness. Give me some food and a shilling or two—"

"Tut, tut!" said Thomas softly. "You shall pay for everything yourself, man. This "—he laid the cigar-box, which lacked a lid, before Finlay—" this is my Christmas present to you. You can't refuse a Christmas present, you know, especially as I have no further use for it. Indeed, I'm sure it has been waiting for this hour. Take it, old friend."

"Oh, God!" whispered Finlay, staring at the gold.

"Take what you think you require for the present—take ten pounds, and the rest you shall find waiting you at your rooms. See, here are ten." Thomas forced the coins into the other's hand. "Now," he went on with an attempt at briskness, "we must not lose any more time. The taxi——"

At that moment the front door was heard to open with a rush and to close with an unusual bang. Next moment there was a tap on the parlour door, and Mrs. Tolley's voice, panting and almost unrecognisable in its excitement and exultation, cried;

"Sir, I've managed to get a splendid turkey!"

"Good!" said Thomas. He laid his hand on the bowed shoulder of Finlay. "That means that you and your family are to help me to eat it to-morrow. . . . Now come, Bob. Your troubles are all behind you You can make a fresh start."

In the passage he forced his overcoat upon his guest. "Try to get back before Christmas comes in," he said. "We'll have something hot ready for your wife and children."

From the cab Finlay managed to whisper: "God bless you, Tom."

Thomas smiled, but not very steadily. "I think He did so an hour ago," he whispered back, and shut the door,

The cab rolled away. Thomas turned to the house, for there was much to be done.

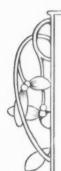
But on the step he paused.

"Dear me!" he said to himself. "And I never told him about Limber and Snigg!"



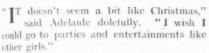
"'The holly and ivy are quite seasonable and nice,' said Mr. Seager, 'but I must ask you to remove that objectionable mistletoe.""

Balliol Salmon.



CENSORED MISTLETOE

By WINIFRED GRAHAM



Mrs. Seager looked at her daughter with

disapproving eyes.

"Really," she declared, "you grow more discontented every day. Remember you are a clergyman's daughter, and your father does not approve of such frivolities. Even if he did, I could not afford you smart clothes for society functions. I am afraid your friendship with Edith Bowden has done you no good. You must remember she is a rich girl, and her father has no strict principles. He allows his daughter to dance and flirt to her heart's content. I should be sorry to see you leading a life of pleasure and giving no time to serious work."

Adelaide was just nineteen and, looking back at the past few years of grey monotony, realised her lot was a hard one. In this poor East End parish her occupations were district visiting and teaching in the Sunday School. Only through Edith Bowden had she caught a glimpse of what life meant in Mayfair, with its round of gaiety, specially

marked at Christmas time.

"I want you to wash all the china ornaments in the drawing-room this morning," said Mrs. Seager, "because, you know, the Bishop is coming to-morrow."

Adelaide did not need to be told, her father and mother had talked of nothing but the Bishop for the last fortnight. They had never seen him, this Bishop of Arda, who had returned from the Colonies, and was to open an institution in Mr. Seager's parish.

"We shall take a lot of trouble to make

the place look nice," said Adelaide, "and I suppose he will hardly glance round. He will be an old fogey with a grey beard; yes, I know he will have a grey beard. He will just gobble his tea, and hurry away without the faintest idea he has been treading on a new carpet, bought out of your savings for his special benefit. At least I mean to try to make the place look Christmassy, since we have had such a nice present of holly and mistletoe."

Directly Adelaide had washed the china she commenced decorating the narrow hall with festoons of green. Just over the door she hung a giant bough of mistletoe, lavishly flecked with pearly berries. Her work completed, she called her father from his study, asking him to admire the festive appearance of the place.

"The holly and ivy are quite seasonable and nice," said Mr. Seager, "but I must ask you to remove that objectionable bough of mistletoe. It does not look at all well in a clerical household, a bad example to our

young servants."

Adelaide set her teeth; this was just in keeping with her parents' prudery. Springing on a chair, she tore down the picturesque bough somewhat viciously, remarking that no men were likely to come in who would want to kiss either her or their two little maids.

All that afternoon Adelaide was restless and low-spirited. She was thinking of the Christmas merrymaking others enjoyed, and rebelling against the dreariness of this quiet household. She sat with her face pressed to the window-pane, longing for something to happen, she cared not what. Then a sigh of relief escaped her, for the

Bowdens' motor-car drew up at the vicarage door. A second glance showed her it was empty, but the chauffeur sent in a pencilled note from Miss Bowden:

"Dear Adelaide,—Isn't it too bad? I am laid up with a cold. I know how good you are, so will you come and spend the evening with a very dull companion? Mother is going out, so do beg Mrs. Seager to spare you. The car will bring you here and take you back. Take a latchkey with you in case you are late, as you may have to stay until mother returns from a dinner party. You will be doing a real act of charity, as I am rather in the blues. Ever yours,

" EDITH."

Adelaide flew with the letter to her parents, for even a quiet evening at the Bowdens'

made a pleasant change,

"Yes, you had better go," said her father approvingly. "Since it is a case of illness you cannot well refuse. Mr. Bowden has been very kind in helping our charities, and you can return it by your cheerful presence in the sick-room."

Adelaide's face was beaming as she settled herself in the luxurious motor under a large sable rug. Edith, even with a cold, would be good company. It was a pleasure to inspect her friend's wonderful wardrobe, and hear of the gay doings so far beyond her own reach.

On arriving at the house she was at once shown up into Miss Bowden's room. Edith was sitting up in bed, wrapped in a silk dressing-jacket, looking wonderfully cheerful for an invalid.

"Hurrah!" she cried, "so you have come. I thought my letter would draw you; wasn't it delightfully sly?"

"What on earth do you mean?" asked Adelaide. "Are you not really ill?"

Edith nestled back on her pillows with a

mischievous expression.

"Oh, I'm ill enough," she assured her friend. "I have a horrid rough throat and a stuffy feeling in my head. The doctor won't hear of my going out to-night, and mother was in rather a fix about it, as she thought my absence would upset Lady Halgrave's table. Then I made a brilliant suggestion. You are just my size, and you are to wear my clothes, and go with mother to the dinner party in my place. You must let I touise dress your hair, and fix in it a

beautiful ornament from Paris, which came this morning for a Christmas present. I have always longed to see you in pretty clothes. If only you were becomingly dressed, you would cut out all the girls I know,"

Adelaide's breath was absolutely taken away by the dazzling proposition.

"Of course I must tell my parents," she said. "I wonder if they will think I ought not to have gone."

"It is a dinner, you see," said Edith reassuringly, "not even a dance. Lady Halgrave has one of the loveliest houses in London, and you are sure to have someone interesting next you at dinner. I am her godchild, and she always gives me a perfectly delightful man."

Adelaide protested, but, on the understanding that she should tell her parents, at last consented, and thanked Edith for

her kindness.

"You are like the fairy godmother waving her wand over poor Cinderella," she declared. "I shall hardly know myself in your beautiful dress."

With eyes that were full of awe she was examining a diaphanous costume of chiffon and roses, spread out for her inspection on the sofa. Dainty little brocade shoes with large paste buckles, and the softest of silk stockings, lay on a chair with gloves and fan, while a scintillating opera wrap and white fur stole awaited their tremulous wearer.

"It will be such fun seeing you transformed that I shall quite enjoy my evening," said Edith cheerily. "My maid is quite excited about it. I had better ring for her now and let her commence operations,"

Certainly it seemed that fairy fingers had worked a miracle upon the Vicar's daughter. When Mrs. Bowden came to Edith's room she hardly recognised Adelaide Seager. With a little pang she was bound to confess that the poor clergyman's daughter far outshone in natural beauty her own child. The simple but effective dressing of Adelaide's brown hair set off the delicately chiselled features and showed the dainty moulding of her head. The large, wistful eyes were bright with excitement, and her flushed checks gave her the appearance of a healthy country girl.

"I have telephoned to Lady Halgrave to say I am bringing a friend in your place,

THE CENSORED MISTLETOE

Edith. She was very sorry to hear you were ill, but said she would be delighted to welcome Miss Seager. I expect it will be a pleasant evening, as they are going to have some good music after dinner, and one never meets dull people at the Halgraves',"

Adelaide thought, as they drove away, if the invited guests were the most boring in the world the sense of novelty would be sufficient for her. The thrill of going to a strange house and seeing society women in their gorgeous raiment, of itself afforded this unsophisticated visitor exquisite antici-

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Adelaide had expected to feel shy, but Edith's garments, which fitted her to perfection, seemed working a charm on her retiring nature. All her timid sensations vanished under the stimulating effect of enjoyment. As she entered the room she was conscious of admiring glances cast in her direction, and a glimpse of herself in a long mirror in the hall showed they were warranted.

"How funny that clothes should make such a difference!" she thought. "I must always try and do my hair just in this same way. I wonder how Louise knew it would suit me so well?"

She was standing near the door of the brightly lighted drawing-room when suddenly she heard a familiar name announced:

"The Bishop of Arda."

She turned, expecting to see the grey-bearded man whose promised presence at the vicarage had become a perfect bogey. To her amazement, her eyes fell on a tall, handsome figure with a wonderfully youthful face. There was something strong and noble in his countenance, though perhaps the chief charm lay in a distinctly humorous mouth. She noticed, directly he spoke, that their hostess began to laugh; he was evidently a man who cultivated wit and was quite at home in society.

"Is that really the Bishop of Arda?" Adelaide whispered to Mrs, Bowden. "He is coming to our house to-morrow, and I somehow thought he would be quite

different."

"Oh! then I must introduce you," replied her chaperon. "He is one of our youngest Colonial Bishops, and has done splendid work. He is only over here for a short time, and he is so popular everyone is trying to get him to their dinners. He

comes of an old family, and has money of his own, so it is surprising he has never married. Now I come to think of it, Lady Halgrave said he must take her in; but she would put Edith on his other side. That will be nice for you, Adelaide, as you are going to meet him again so soon."

It seemed like a wonderful dream to Adelaide, for the Bishop was instantly attracted by the young girl who spent her life in a squalid East End parish.

"It is marvellous," he said, "to think you can work among the poor all day, and come out looking as fresh in the evening as if you were a society girl. I shall look forward to seeing you in your own home, for I am sure you must be a sunbeam wherever you shine."

Adelaide felt a little guilty as she listened to the words, remembering how she had rebelled against her fate only that afternoon. She felt that this man, with his magnetic personality, had the power to draw out all that was best in human nature, and at once there rose in her heart a warm fever of hero

worship.

"The girl on your right," whispered Lady Halgrave to the Bishop, at dinner, " is a stranger to me. One meets pretty women every day, but I don't think I ever saw a sweeter face; very young, yet she looks as if she had suffered. So few girls of that age have any soul behind their eyes."

The Bishop agreed, with a warmth that rather surprised the speaker. A keen observer, she noticed his admiring interest in Mrs. Bowden's friend, and made the remark with the intention of drawing him out on the subject. Then, tactfully, she turned to the man on her left, noting how eagerly the Bishop resumed his conversation with Miss Seager.

As they drove back, Mrs. Bowden remarked on what she called Adelaide's conquest.

"The Bishop of Arda was simply delighted with you, my dear," she said. "He never left your side all the evening. I am sure he was far more interested in you than in the music."

Adelaide was very humble about herself as she replied:

"It was only Edith's clothes, I am sure. He would not have noticed me if I had been in my old drab dress. I expect he will be thoroughly disillusioned when he sees me at home."

Mrs. Bowden smiled to herself, for she had thought of a little plan which she quickly carried into execution. When Adelaide was changing out of her finery to return to the East End, Mrs. Bowden gave a hurried order to Louise.

"Put that pretty day dress of Miss Edith's into a portmanteau, and the hat to match. I am lending them to Miss Seager to wear to-morrow."

As she said good-night to the grateful Adelaide, she told her what she had done.

"Blue suits you so well, be sure you wear it," she said. "It is so simple, your father cannot complain you are dressed up, and a man would never know it came from one of the best houses in Paris. Your figure will look sweet in it. It isn't an elaborate gown, but there is so much in the cut, you know."

The following morning Adelaide explained how Mrs. Bowden had pressed her to take Edith's place to save Lady Halgrave any awkwardness. She mentioned that the Bishop of Arda was there, but was somewhat reticent in her description of the evening.

"Although the Bishop goes to such grand houses, I don't believe he would have noticed the holes in our drawing-room carpet," she assured her mother. "He is one of those outdoor, breezy kind of men who wouldn't spy about and judge one by such petty things. I am sure he would roar with laughter if I told him father objected to the mistletoe."

Mrs. Seager, who had been feeling nervous at the prospect of entertaining the Bishop, was relieved to know he was not an awe-inspiring personage. She was certainly surprised when Adelaide appeared in her dainty, borrowed gown.

"Really," she said, "that colour suits you to perfection, for it just matches your eyes. The yoke is all real lace. You must be very careful not to soil it. I must write and thank Mrs. Bowden, but I fear she is implanting my child's mind with a desire for the pomps and vanities of a world quite beyond our reach."

When the opening ceremony was over, and the Bishop returned to the vicarage, it was a vast surprise to the good clergyman and his wife to see him on such friendly terms with their quiet little Adelaide. It was such a novelty to be entertaining a

really attractive guest, that Adelaide came out in a new light. Her fund of conversation proved a blessing to her parents, whose minds were less elastic, since they had lived longer in a groove.

To their surprise they heard the Bishop inviting her to meet him at a children's treat he had to attend the following day, Christmas Eve,

"I am sure you are not too old to help at a Christmas tree," he said, writing down the address. "It is to take place in a big hall for one thousand poor school-children, who are being entertained by a wealthy philanthropist at my suggestion."

Adelaide readily accepted the invitation, feeling her head whirl.

"Three days running," she thought.
"Why, it is more like a fairy tale than ever, I thought Christmas Eve would be such a dull day, and that after this meeting I should never see him again. What a pity he is leaving London so soon; if only the Colonies could spare him just a little longer!"

As the Bishop drove away, Mr. and Mrs. Seager thanked Adelaide for proving such a

"You really were quite useful," said her mother. "I believe you have made an impression on the Bishop, and perhaps he will say a good word for your father, for we could do with a better living. I wonder if Mrs. Bowden would let you wear that dress again to-morrow. I never saw you look so well."

Adelaide set her teeth, and an expression of determination flashed into her blue

"No," she said, "I shall put on my own everyday dress, and let him see me as I really am. I expect he only liked me because I looked like the butterfly girls, who dress up for men's approval. I hate to think it was just Edith's clothes that made me different, but I am afraid it is true. He will probably hardly notice me in the crowd to morrow; but perhaps it will do me good. I don't want to grow conceited, mother, and it is rather foolish to masquerade when one cannot keep it up."

There was something of bitterness in her voice, and a painful knocking at her heart she could not understand. Then she rushed away and tore off Edith's dress, the tears blinding her eyes.

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"Fairy fingers worked a miracle upon the Vicar's daughter"-p. 104.

Drawn by

"It was very kind of the Bowdens," she told herself, "but I am not sure that their kindness won't turn to cruelty in the end. Still, they must never know; they meant it for the best,"

H

THE Bishop of Arda moved about among the happy children, looking only for one face. At last he caught sight of a pair of wistful eyes in the doorway, and the most sensitive mouth he had ever seen. wondered why Adelaide Seager looked sad and depressed this afternoon, and the fact that she was less joyous hurt him

strangely.

"Perhaps she is shy and oppressed by the crowd," he thought, making his way towards her, his tall figure towering above everyone else. He took her hand and pressed it warmly, never noticing that her dress was somewhat old and out of date. What did he care if the dull-brown gown proved less becoming than the soft blue silk of yesterday? She was the same sweet identity-the girl with the soul behind her eyes.

Still conscious of her shortcomings, Adelaide could not throw herself completely into the gaiety of the moment. Though she exerted herself to help in the stripping of the tree and the marshalling of eager children, there was an air of finality about it all. Frequently she told herself she would never see the young Bishop again,

When the last ringing cheer had died, and the children were trooping away, laden with gifts which a red-gowned Father Christmas pressed into their outstretched hands, Adelaide turned to bid the Bishop good-

"Thank you so much for asking me," she stammered, hoping he would not see her emotion. "I am afraid I must go now, and I shall never forget your kindness. Perhaps some day we shall meet again when you return to England."

He looked down at her with a strange, penetrating expression which made her fear he could read her mind like an open book.

" It isn't time to say good-bye yet," he replied. "How do you propose to get home?"

"Oh, I know my way quite well," she answered. "I shall take a motor-bus. I thought it was going to snow, but I looked outside just now, and it is a clear, frosty evening."

" Nonsense," he replied, thinking she was far too pretty to stray about alone. "I am going to drive you home in a taxi, and I should like to come in and see your parents again."

Adelaide positively gasped, but he would not listen to her thanks, simply declaring he was giving himself a pleasure-a Christmas

treat, in fact.

Her heart beat wildly as they whirled away together through the gloom. How wonderful it seemed to be alone with him for the first, and perhaps the last,

"It is years," he said, "since I spent Christmas in Old England. You have made my Christmas week an unforgettable

Adelaide looked up, her every nerve tingling with surprise. He was bending over her now, and his face was very near her own. Was it an accident, or could she believe that his hand actually touched her trembling fingers, a touch which seemed to light in her the fires of a glowing response?

"When happiness is in sight," he continued, " and time is so short, one cannot be conventional. I want to ask you something, and I can give you just three days to think it over. Could you bear to leave London, which holds so many pleasures for you, and come away with me to share my life in the Colonies? It may not be for very long, and then I shall return to England; only I do want you so dreadfully, I dare not wait for a lapse of years. Adelaide, have I frightened you? Have I spoken too soon?"

He felt her trembling violently, for his arms were now round her. She did not draw away; instead, she nestled closer, like a

confiding child.

"Three days," she whispered, hardly recognising her own voice; "why, I could answer you in three minutes. I thought you only liked me because Edith Bowden lent me her beautiful clothes, just as the Fairy Godmother dressed Cinderella. To-day I went back to my drab self, and it has made no difference."

He laughed as he listened to her words, amused she should think for one moment that clothes could influence his feelings.

THE CENSORED MISTLETOE

"You poor little soul, is that why you looked so sad to-day?" he murmured, raising her face to his, and stealing a kiss in the shadow of the taxi. "How shallow you must have thought me!"

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as the To-day s made words, noment Adelaide could not answer, for the first kiss of love set her brain reeling, leading her into some wonderful realm of dreamland, more glorious than any she had pictured in her wildest visions of romance,



"Adelaide is late," said Mr. Seager. "I hope she is not becoming too absorbed in worldly pleasures."

As he spoke, the hall bell rang, and the sound of footsteps approaching arrested his attention.

"That must be Adelaide; and she is bringing somebody in," declared the Vicar, tuning to his wife. "What a pity we have let the fire down so low,"

The door opened and a strangely radiant girl burst into the room, followed by a man whose face wore the stamp of new-found happiness.

"I have come to wish you a Happy Christmas," said the Bishop, wringing Adelaide's parents warmly by the hand. "But I come as a robber, too, for I want to ask you the greatest favour in the world. I want you to give me your daughter."

Mrs. Seager dropped into a chair, so utterly bewildered she could say nothing. The Vicar, pulling himself together, tried to conceal his amazement.

"I have been asking the Bishop's advice about the mistletoe," put in Adelaide with a mischievous twinkle in her eyes. "He says, if it were his house he should certainly allow it to hang in the hall."

"Really, you quite bewilder me," stammered Mr. Seager. "What with marriage and mistletoe, I don't know where I am."

Adelaide moved to her father's side, and placed her arms round his neck.

"It is—oh! such a wonderful Christmas for me," she said. "Won't you be glad, and rejoice in our happiness?"

"But you only met two days ago," declared the Vicar, flinging up his hands.

"The moment I saw Adelaide I knew I wanted her," said the Bishop with a fond smile. "Even lovemaking must be done quickly in this hurrying age, if we would seize Fortune at the flood."

"At least, you must give me time to collect my thoughts," said Mr. Seager. "You had both better go and find that mistletoe bough, and hang it up again."

Hand in hand they left the room, only too glad of an excuse to be alone.

Mrs. Seager flung herself into her husband's arms,

"I hope," she gasped, "I shan't wake and find it all a dream. A Bishop, only think of it, a Bishop for Adelaide!"



Young Crows.

Photo: S. H. Smith,



"Perhaps her ambition settles upon a turkey which she sees near the inevitable capon in the poulterer's " p, 112

THE MERRY OLD CITY CHRISTMAS

A Leaf out of the Past

By FRANK ELIAS

"Now all our neighbours' chimneys smoke, And Christmas blocks are burning: The ovens they with baked meat choke, And all the spits are turning. Without the door let sorrow lye; And if for cold it hap to die, We'll bury it in a Christmas pie, And ever more be merry."

HRISTMAS in the City" suggests, to-day, closed shops and offices and deserted streets, the drabness of the scene only partially relieved by the modest celebrations of caretakers, watchmen, the police, and such tradesmen as still live over their shops. But Christmas in the City in other days was a far different affair. "London within" was a home. Looking over an ancient directory one encounters such entries as "Thomas Cranmer, Esq., Queen Hithe Ward"; "the Rt. Hon. Earl of Shrewsbury, Brood Street Ward"; "Sir Thomas Lucye, of the County of Gloucester, Great Tower Ward," etc. And if the City was the home of such men as these who had access to other parts, it was certainly the domicile of the merchant and the tradesman, who, indeed, never left it from year's end to year's end. And so Christmas in the City was as obviously and as boisterously kept up as in the great country houses,

There are two Londons in history, and the year of the Great Fire is the line which divides the two. Before that date London was a city of wooden houses which were built on the curious plan of making each storey overhang the one below it. resulted, of course, was that opposite houses drew nearer as they approached the sky, making it possible to wish your opposite neighbour a "Merry Christmas" without leaving your room and without raising your voice. But while such a minor convenience was heavily paid for in the fact of the absence of air and light, it must be remembered that ignorance of any better state is an excellent source of content, and so the citizen was not found complaining of his lot. The London of that time was a London of cruder emotions than that of to-day, and the average citizen seems to have been a happy enough soul. There were then no delicate self-investigations. A man wanted food, laughter, jollity, and when he had satisfied these appetites there was little else to fill. He was an elemental creature with a hungry, and an almost savage, need for elemental things. He was the being of Mr. Chesterton's tenderest affections. Let us join the citizen's household on Christmas Eve and see how he conducts himself. We are reminded of Christmas at once, for the room, like the rest of the house, is lausishly decorated with "holme (the evergreen oak), ivy, bayes, and whatever the season of the year afforded to be green."

The "Pepperer" at Home

As we enter, the family is at its midday repast. But do not start. We have here not a person without consequence, but a solid tradesman—none other, indeed, than a grocer, or "pepperer," as he was earlier called. His guild is the oldest in the City, he wears as good broadcloth as any of his neighbours, and yet there seems to be little enough comfort in his house. The room is rudely furnished and straw lies about the floor.

The meal is hurried through to-day, for the good pepperer must get back to his shop. More than those of any other do the men of his guild sell the commodities most symbolic of the festival. For, from his journeymen and apprentices, even now housewives are buying the precious spices, gathered hardly, and brought still more hardly, from the East.

What the pepperer has to offer may be gathered from the words of an old rhymester:

"Now the season of the year
Bids thee to provide good cheer
For to feast thy needy neighbours,
Who do live by their hard labours.
Then the coyn freely bestow
For raisins and malgo:
No currants, prunes, nor sugar lack,
Pepper both the white and black,
Nutmegs, ginger, cloves and mace,
Rice for perridge i' the first place.

Passing into the shop, we see that for all these delicacies there is a clamorous demand,

THE QUIVER

Behind his counter the pepperer now, of course, remains—business is far too brisk for him to go gadding about the streets. But his wife and boy—soon to be apprenticed to his father—set out to gather their Christmas stores. Her purchases are mostly food; present-giving was more a matter of New Year observance, and probably in her class less common than in the Court set.

As the pepperer's wife and son enter the street they are met by loud cries echoing beneath the eaves of the shops, from the lusty lungs of journeymen traders: "What d'yer lack? "The streets are elaborately decorated with evergreens, and the mother, as she points this out, perhaps tells her son how, in 1444, "at the Leadenhall in Cornhill," a tall post, which had been driven into the pavement, and to which had then been attached "holie" and ivy, "for disport of Christmas

to the people," was torn up by lightning, Stones were flung bodily from the pavement right into houses, and the citizens were frightened for their lives. It was a Christmas storm which remained long in their minds,

The mother will go on, perhaps, to explain to her son, in the charming manner of old, the meaning of the evergreens, which were there set up to signify that the Holy Child should always be green and flourishing, and should live for ever.

Our pepperer's most admirable wife knows what she wants at this Christmas time, and enters, first of all, the flesher's. For the rich—the lords resident in the City, and the Mayor and Aldermen—there will be boar's head and peacock. Mrs. Pepperer, however, will probably content herself with beef or pork. Or perhaps her ambition settles upon a turkey which she sees near the inevitable capon in the poulterer's next

door. Here she is shown fat geese and "coney,"

"What may be had tor thy money."

She will buy vegetableswhich have been in use since the thirteenth century-and finally she will certainly see that she has the ingredients for those most desired of Christmas delicacies, plum porridge, mutton pies, and "frumity" or furnante, the latter of which was made up of wheat, broth, milk of almonds, eggs, all mixed together, to be then served with venison or mutton.

At length she returns to get on with her cooking.



"It was possible to wish your neighbour a 'Merry Christmas' without leaving your room "-p. 111

THE MERRY OLD CITY CHRISTMAS



"The pepperer is awakened by the sound of voices without, and sends down 'largesse' to the carol singers."

Drawn by Wal Puget.

But presently she is interrupted by her baker, who arrives to offer her a cake made in the shape of a baby or of a lamb. This offering accepted, she is next, perhaps, visited by her chandler, who offers for her acceptance a large candle. Before the Reformation such candles had a great importance to the citizens, all of whom burnt them on Christmas Eve—then regarded as a time of vigil.

The "Waits"

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The darkness has now begun to fall, and the shopkeepers and householders are hanging out their lamps, as they have had to do since 1415, when the Mayor issued an order to them to do so on every night from All Hallows to Candlemas. The order was that when the watchman went round calling to the citizens, "Hang out your lights!" the call should be instantly obeyed.

The pepperer presently retires to rest, but is at length awakened by the sound of voices without, and sends down "largesse" to the carol singers. Carol singing was an old custom of the City, and was used long before the Reformation. Moreover, in London, right up to the middle of the last century, nearly every important street had its recognised carol singers. There were also wandering vocalists who went from town to town. For instance, there were two famous men—Outroaringe Dick and Wat Wimbars—who travelled the country and got twenty shillings a day for their trouble. Probably London was on their itinerary, and doubtless our pepperer had to pay them, or someone of their kind.

These singers are known and abused generally by the name of "waits." It is a curious fact that the waits of the City were at one time regarded as a kind of office. A man could buy a place in the company and was then free to enjoy the perquisites.

We must return to our pepperer. After a sound night's sleep in his roof chamber he

rises and gets off to early service at St. Paul's, where the Lord Mayor and the livery are also in attendance. The Mayor invariably went to St. Paul's on Christmas Day, save during its rebuilding after the Fire, when he went to Bow Church. Service over, the pepperer returns homewards. Arrived at home again, the pepperer and his family partake of the Christmas dinner. There is the beef and the goose, and the capon, the plum porridge, the mutton pies, and the frumity. Perhaps our modern social instinct is a little outraged by the manners of the good man and his party, for food drops from their mouths as they eat, and they have no objection to use their fingers. Such were the people's habits, says Sandys. But other times, other manners.

The meal over, the pepperer will perhaps invite in some of his neighbours and their children for games. It may be difficult for us to realise-so completely conscious are we of our own epoch-that centuries ago people amused themselves with just such methods as we use to-day. As the mists of the years fall away, and we gaze upon that cheerful home, with the stout pepperer dodging noisily behind chairs and over tables here and there among his own and his neighbours' children, the games seem oddly familiar. We recognise "blind man's buff," "puss in the corner," "snapdragon"; there is also "questions and commands." The last game has perhaps another form now, but do we not recognise an arrangement by which the "commander," as he was called, has the right to ask questions of the other players, who, if they refuse, are liable to be 'smutted," or have their faces blackened?

Trouble with the "Boxers"

And as winds their Christmas Day to its happy close. Only in the day following was the poor pepperer to be found with his brow clouded as he faced the insistent "boxers." The demand for Christmas boxes has been an old trouble in the City. As far back as 1419 we find recorded in the letter books of the City; "Wednesday, the last day of April. 7 Henry V. ordinance by William Sevenok, the Mayor, and the Aldermen, forbidding any valet or other servant of the Mayor, Sheriffs, or the City, thenceforth to beg for money from tradespeople at Christmas time under colour of an

'oblation,' as heretofore they had been accustomed to do with threats or promises." It is to be feared that this order had little enough effect, for the practice was in existence hundreds of years later. And not only did the servants of the Mayor levy blackmail of this kind, but the apprentices used to go round collecting in a threatening manner, Moreover, to compensate themselves for what they had to pay the servants of the Mayor and other of the more wealthy citizens. the tradesmen would often increase the amounts of their bills. We will, however. acquit our pepperer of any such practice, and merely observe him as he doles out rewards to this and that servant as well as to the various public functionaries. If his son should inquire of his father the origin of the boxing system, he will probably be told that it arose in the pre-Reformation days, when boxes used to be set up on the ships sailing out of Ratcliff, and the money therein collected during the voyage was presented to the priest to pay for Masses, imploring the Divine forgiveness for the wickedness of Londoners at the time of the sacred festival. It was these contribution "boxes" which provide the name for the only feature of the festival which the householder dislikes.

Having made his unwilling disbursements, our pepperer may be said to have completed his Christmas celebration. Let us leave him in his mellow enjoyment and carry our minds to other and later anniversaries, at which, perhaps, the youngest member of the pepperer's happy party only was to be present—as a bent and shrivelled ancient, mumbling of ancient things.

The most remarkable Christmas in the history of London was that of the Great Frost of 1608. It would have touched even the dulled imagination of the modern. Much more then was it a source of wonder to the ingenuous citizen of the seventeenth century. This was not the first time for the Thames to be frozen over, that phenomenon having been witnessed at Christmas, 1564. On the last day of that year people walked upon the ice from London Bridge to Westmurster. But this was not the "Great Frost."

The history of the Great Frost is told in a quaint contemporary dialogue between a citizen and a countryman. The latter asks for facts, and is told, "You must know that d been mises." d little existot only blackused to ianner. es for of the itizens, se the wever, ractice, es out well as If his origin bly be mation on the money e was Masses, or the of the bution or the house-

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"The meal over, the pepperer will invite in some neighbours for games. . . . We recognise 'blind man's buff ' . . ."

Drawn by Wal Paget.

the Thames began to put on his freezing coat which he yet wears about the week before Christmas." It was soon so firm that the "citizen's wife that looks pale when she sits in a boat for fear of drowning, thinks that here she treads as safe now as in her parlour-of all ages, of both sexes, of all professions, this is the common path." The surface of the river looked exactly like a fair. Men and boys played football and indulged in archery, and it was said that more than half the city's population went on the ice. Before long there was business being carried on there. Some enterprising folk actually stood on the ice with pans of hot coals, so that passers-by might warm their hands thereat. Moreover two barber's shops were set up in booths on the ice, and men who were not in need of a shave patronised the barber, in order to say afterwards that they "had lost their hair between Bankside and London Bridge."

But while the frost brought trade to some it kept it away from others. Foodstuffs could not be brought into the City by road or river, and satirical citizens, when the tradesmen called out, "What d'yer lack?" would retort, "What d'yer

lack yourself?"

Another Christmas remembered for long in the City was that of 1643. In that year many of the thinking citizens had taken the side of the Commonwealth, and the general suspicion of popery led some of them to open on Christmas Day. But the threat of riot made them close again. A contemporary apologist, however, was forthcoming to explain that "it is the opinion of those that it is a day wherein it is very fit for the people of God to congregate in the church to hear the word of God preached, but not a holiday or such a day as it is of absolute necessity to be lapt holy; it is a day wherein it is no ser for a man to follow his calling in, and we must not, by a popish innovation, adore the day."

The Plague Christmas

The Christmas of 1005 must have been a gloomy one, for it was in the December of that year that the Plague began to lay its hand upon London. Not that the disease was yet general, but there was a feeling in the City that already Divine punishment was overhanging it for the general

profligacy which had followed the withdrawat of the more wholesome Commonwealth rule.

Perhaps the Fire year provided no merry Christmas for Londoners. But when a new London rose—a better, cleaner London—Christmas began to be less shadowed than of old by reminders of losses from family groups through plague and other diseases, and the citizen entered upon a series of celebrations of the festival which were Merry Christmases indeed.

Such a Christmas as the Londoner spent was doubtless that enjoyed also by inhabitants of other ancient cities. Yet each ancient town had some special feature. The citizen of Leicester, for instance, in the seventeenth century had an odd custom that when all were gathered at the Christmas table there was a pause while hands and spoons were held up in memory of absent friends. Perhaps in some earlier century one such guest, lifting his eager hand, let his mind wander to London and to a certain pepperer we know of,

At Chester all the farm servants of the county used to come to town and wander through the streets spending lavishly the carnings of the year. They always took care to be engaged only from New Year's Day to Christmas, so that on Christmas Day, and for the next week, they were free to leave their unfortunate masters to fend for themselves. At Exeter the official company of City Waits provided the chief diversion. These men were really policemen, and kept order after dark, as well as filling the night with the music.

Yes, the citizen, whether of London or the great towns of the provinces, knew how to maintain his Christmas no less than did the countryman. And perhaps, as we survey in our conscious modern spirit these ancient merrymakings, we grow at last a little wistful. For hie that was then so simple has become so complex.

And yet, properly looked at, is the case greatly altered? For if we are to look back must we not look back, beyond the London of yonder dim centuries, to Bethlehem? If the citizen had cause to rejoice it was because of what happened there. And if the citizen rejoiced thea, may we not lay aside our complexities, if but for a little while, and rejoice also?



UNAWARES

A Fairy Godmother in other Garb

By J. T. DICKINSON

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THE long, low kitchen of Woodend Farm looked very cosy early one morning in late September.

It was a comfortable room, nicely furnished with substantial old-fashioned things, the best of their kind, and used as a breakfast room, for there was a good-sized outer kitchen behind, where the necessary work was done, and that, too, was kept as spick and span as possible by old Namie, the faithful servant, who had lived with the Denisons ever since their son John was a baby in arms.

The fireplace in the inner kitchen was very quaint, with a high mantelpiece and a settle on each side; the large window, with its broad sill ferming a seat, looked into a pleasant old-world garden; altogether it was a charming place, and no wonder Janet Denison loved it.

The dining-room proper was seldom used, but on the other side of the house, opening on to a trim lawn, by long French windows, was a dainty drawing-room; Janet's piano was there, and whenever she had a spare half-hour, she would spend it practising her beloved music.

Janet Denison was no beauty, but there was something very attractive-looking about her, as she gaily sang to herself that morning,

the picture of neatness in her simple homemade dress, as she bustled about preparing breakfast. Although her features were somewhat commonplace, she had a good complexion, large grey eyes, and plenty of soft dark hair, that she wore coiled gracefully round her small head.

Her face had a very sweet expression, for she was of a sunny temperament, and although her life of late had been full of care, she looked at the bright side of everything, and was always cheery.

The postman's knock caused her to look round from some scones she was toasting.

The next moment the old servant entered with a letter.

"Oh, thank you, Nannie, I was just going to ask you to tell Mr. John breakfast is ready. I'm sure he'll be half-famished; I suppose he's been up for hours,"

"Ay! ever sin the dawn; working like a slave along with the mcn. I never saw his equal. I'll be off to the dairy, Miss Janet, and get Molly away to the field to bring him in," said the good woman, as she bustled out of the room.

"Now I wonder who this is from?" said Janet to herself, as she took up the letter, and, carefully cutting the envelope, she read the closely-written pages with a bewildered expression.

THE QUIVER

"Impossible," she said aloud; "quite impossible. John must not—oh! here you are," she cried, as a tall, fine-looking man entered the room. "John, the strangest thing has happened! Who do you think has written to me? But there, I'd better tell you, for you'll never guess—Mrs. Ross, my godmother; only fancy, she's in London!"

"Mrs. Ross? Why, I didn't know she was alive, let alone in England. The last I heard of her was some years ago, when she and her husband were off to South America. I never knew such people for travelling. She must be a very old woman," said John, as he took his seat at the table and helped himself to the tempting dishes his sister placed before him.

"What does she say, Janet?"

"She wants to come and stay with us. I fancy, by what she says, she's had some great loss. Mr. Ross is dead, and she speaks as if things have gone badly with her ever since. She must have had reverses. Do you remember her well, John? You can only have been a little fellow when I was

christened," said Janet, as she passed his coffee-cup.

"They came again after that; you'd be about four then, little woman. I remember that time very well. I used to call them Uncle and Auntie Ross. Our people thought a lot of them, and we'd a fine time; but they were an elderly couple then, and that's twenty years ago. Why, Janet, she must be over seventy!"

"She appears to have written regularly for a long time, and received no answers; and, of course, has been wondering why. The letters must have miscarried. I don't think she knows of our altered circumstances, but has heard in London that we are left alone. It is impossible that she can come here, John."

"Why?" he asked, quietly going on with his breakfast.

"Why?" repeated his sister. "Because I think we've quite enough to do. We cannot afford visitors, and have no time to entertain them. What could I do with a strange old lady? She says she had a severe illness before she sailed, but that the



"She saw Frank Raynor ride up. He jumped from his horse at the gate, and beckoned to the girl" p. 122.

Drawn by J. E. Suteliffe.

voyage has done her a world of good; but there!"—and she tossed the letter over to him—"read for yourself; I know you have a weakness for old ladies, John."

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He smiled as he picked it up, a wonderfully pleasant smile that lit up his strong, purposeful face with its keen blue eyes and fine

"Poor old body! she only wants to stay a short time just while she looks round. I see she means to settle in England now. Hard lines to come back and find relations and old friends dead; I expect she'd find plenty, though, if she'd returned with a fortune. Is it quite impossible for us to have her, Janet? The little mother was very fond of her," he added, as he laid down the letter.

"Our plain way of living mightn't suit her, John, and I'm so anxious to keep down expenses; I'd love to have her. In fact, I hate refusing," went on Janet earnestly; "but I feel sure that if we are to scrape that money together by the end of the year, we mustn't spend an extra penny, and I've set my heart on it. I do so want to be clear of debt."

"Poor little Sis, it's been a hard struggle." His voice had a very tender note in it as he gazed fondly at the girl's earnest face. "Cheer up; the turn of the tide has set in. I've been wonderfully fortunate lately: I had capital prices at the market this week; in fact, Frank Raynor tells me folks are beginning to call me ' Lucky Denison,' " and John laughed. "Anyway," he went on, "I really think the old place will soon be once more all our own, and I don't think if Auntic Ross came in at this moment she would find much lacking in the way of comfort," and he glanced appreciatively at the daintily-laid table, for although the cloth was well darned it was of the finest damask, while the thin old china would have delighted a collector, and you could see your face in the shining silver. "You are such a good cook, too, little woman-you make the most of everything; and there's Nannie, a host in herself, to say nothing of Molly, who would be proud to help. Suppose you write and explain? Tell her the truth—that we're not very flush, but that, if she likes to come and take us as we are, she will have a warm welcome. What do you say?"

Janet hesitated; woman-like, she thought of so many things, little extras, that would be needed; and then she had made such plans for the coming Christmas, had set her heart on buying John a warm rug for the trap, and getting herself the new costume she so badly wanted. Then, too, there was the extra work, and, surely, she was kept busy enough already! How thoughtless men were, even the best of them. Yet how she longed to please this dear, good-hearted brother of hers, and she resolved to do without the new dress and sundry other luxuries, so she answered brightly: "Well, that settles it; I'll write to-day and tell her to come as soon as she can, for the weather will soon change."

"Ay, do; but I must go," and John rose as he spoke, "for I want to finish that far field as soon as I can. Oh! I forgot to tell you Sam Gill says his wife's ever so much better. Your visit yesterday, and the good things you took, cheered her up a lot. The poor fellow's very grateful," and with a nod and smile he was off. Janet sighed as, going to the window, she watched him go down the garden into the rickyard beyond.

"Poor boy, how grey he's getting; it's been a heavy burden for him, and dreadfully hard work," she thought to herself.

"Oh, Nannie!" she cried, turning round as the old woman entered to remove the breakfast things, "we're going to have a visitor—an old lady."

"Laws me, Miss Janet! What time have we for visitors?"

"Don't grumble, Nannie, for Mr. John has set his heart on it. It's Mrs. Ross. Do you remember her?"

"I've heard your ma speak of her, but I happened to be away when she stayed here. She went to foreign parts, to make a fortune, I suppose."

"I think to lose one, Nannie, for she's not at all well off."

"Well, I never did reckon anything of them foreign countries; if folks can't do in England, they can't do anywhere," declared the old woman, stalking off with her tray.

Janet had plenty to do, and it was not until evening that she found time to answer her godmother's letter,

Woodend Farm was a quaint, rambling building, more like a small mansion than an ordinary farm-house. It was rather in need of repair, but the kindly ivy climbing up the grey walls made it look very picturesque as the station cab lumbered up to the gate, a week or two later.

Janet hurried to the door in astonishment as she heard the loud knock.

"Why, Martin! Is that you? What's the matter?"

"I've fetched an old lady up, Miss Janet; her's comed from foreign parts I reckon, by what she says. Asking for a taxi, indeed! I telled her hosses wos good enough for Woodend as yet. Didn't you expect her?" asked the ancient cabman anxiously.

"It must be Mrs. Ross!" And the girl hurriedly ran to the waiting cab, from which a little elderly lady was alighting. She had such a dear old face, framed in snowy white hair, such kind dark eyes and sweet smile, that Janet's heart was won at once.

"You see, I've taken you at your word, and come on right away. I didn't wait to write; I wanted to see you real bad!" And as she kissed her young hostess, she whispered: "Child, you are like your mother; I loved her very dearly," and the gentle old voice trembled.

"I suppose you remember the old place," said Janet, as she led the way to the house.

"Ay, that I do! Just the same dear, beautiful garden. And the seat under the great tree on the lawn! Many a chat have I had with your mother there. Those were happy hours! There does not seem to be a thing altered," she exclaimed, as they crossed the old-tashioned hall with its oak furniture.

"I'm taking you into the front kitchen, for it's the only room with a fire this afternoon, and you will be more comfortable," and Janet smiled at the satisfied look of the old lady as she sank into the cosy easy chair, which was drawn up invitingly before the fire, for October had come in and the days were getting colder.

"I'm atraid you'll find a very primitive state of affairs here. Woodend is sadly behind the times. A motor-car is still a novelty, for the Squire details them, and what few do find their way here are regarded as evilsmelling, dust-raising monstrosities," went on Janet merrily.

Mrs. Ross smiled, "Where I've just come from, dearie, everything moves at a breakneck pace, so it will be a real novelty to have a rest from the bustle and the rush,"

Here, Nannie, who had been looking after Martin and the luggage, announced that tea was all but ready; the old woman was quite won over by Mrs. Ross greeting her as an old friend.

"Your dear mistress was always talking of you when I was here before, so I seem to know you quite well," she said in her pleasant way.

"I would have been at the station to meet you had I known you were coming," went on Janet, as she helped Nannie lay the cloth.

"Mary wanted me to send word," said the old lady. "Mary is my young friend who nursed me when I was bad abroad. She has come to England with me, and went yesterday to visit some relations, so I was left alone. One night in the hotel was enough for me, so I packed up my things, and here I am, and already I feel more at home than I've done for a long time; I always loved this place, and often longed to see it again. I was grieved when I'd no letters; but my dear man was a great traveller, and we were never long in one place, so possibly that accounts for it. I was shocked when a friend in London told me you had lost your mother."

"She died soon after father. It was a great blow to us when she too was taken, but there was so much to do that we seemed to have no time even to indulge in our grief."

"A great blessing too. I often think, child, that work is the greatest comfort there is in trouble, and it never does harm. It's worry that kills, not work. But now, dearie, I would like to get my bonnet off and have a bit of a wash."

"Are you too tired to come upstairs?" asked Janet.

"I'm not tired at all; you'll find I'm not so easily knocked up," she answered, as she briskly trotted up the wide stone stairs.

Janet was charmed with her guest, and John, coming in to his tea, and taken completely by surprise, took to her amazingly, and they were soon chatting away. She was a delightful companion; her experiences in the different countries she had visited had been very varied, and they listened entranced as she vividly portrayed lite abroad.

Later in the evening Frank Raynor came in; he was a gentlemanly-looking man with a pleasant face and winning manner, the son of Squire Raynor, of Woodend Hall.

He did not stay very long; his business



"'Oh!' said Janet rapturously, as she unwrapped a beautiful stole and muff"—p. 121.

Drawn by J. E. Sutcliffe.

was supposed to be with John, but the shrewd old eyes were quick to notice the tell-tale colour in Janet's cheeks as he greeted her, and the expression in his laughing blue eyes as they rested on the sweet face of his young hostess.

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"Has the Squire only the one son?" she asked that night, as Janet helped her to undress, "When I was here before, the Hall was shut up."

"I've heard mother say that the Squire was away a long time after his wife died. Frank was sent to school. He was quite a big boy when he came to the Hall."

"He seems a nice young fellow."

"Everybody likes Frank. Being very

generous and kind-hearted, he's a great contrast to his father, for the old man is miserly to a degree, and very eccentric. John and I don't like Frank coming here so much, for the Squire is not friendly with us, and it leads to ill-feeling between them, but he will come, for John and he are great There's not much society about. Both Vicar and Doctor are elderly men with no families, and no other visitors are welcomed by the Squire; in fact, if Frank did not run up to London now and then, to stay with his mother's people, I don't think he would stand it; but here I am chattering away, and I'm sure you must be very tired," and, with a good-night kiss, Janet slipped away,

The days flew by; Mrs. Ross stayed on, a welcome guest, for she made herself very useful and was a real help to Janet in household affairs. Shrewd and far-seeing, she surprised John by her knowledge of agriculture, and gave him some valuable hints about the management of the cattle.

She was a woman who inspired confidence, and John Denison found himself telling her of his troubles and difficulties as freely as if she had been the mother he so deeply mourned.

As the old lady knitted, so quietly, the wise old brains were busy, and by a few skilful questions she gathered the story of hard work and self-denial, and realised what a noble nature this quiet, self-contained young farmer had.

" Janet," she asked suddenly one day, as they sat alone together, "does John ever think of marrying? Has he no sweetheart?"

"I used to think there was something between him and our late Vicar's daughter, Angela Lee," replied Janet meditatively; " but she went away-to Australia, with her father, who was consumptive, and the doctors thought he might recover if he went at once. It was just the time father died, and we were in such dreadful trouble. I expect John didn't think his position entitled him to speak; at any rate, there was no engagement, and we haven't heard from them for a long time. It's a pity, for she was a dear girl, and would have made him a good wife. He's had a rough time these last few years. Poor father had quite a mania for speculation. He lost a lot of money, and died over head and ears in debt. John had to come home from college and work like a slave, with no time to think of love and marriage. It's made an old man of him before his time, but he's prospered wonderfully, although at first, had it not been for his love of the old place, I think he would have let Squire Raynor have it, and we would have gone to Canada and started afresh."

" Did the Squire want it?"

"He always has hankered after it; you see, the two properties lie very close together. John promised father to stick to the old home, and he's not the man to break his word."

"It's been in your family a good many years," said the old lady in a musing tone

"For generations. I hope John will marry some day, although he seems unlike it at present." "Tell me, dearie, how it is ____ "But here Nannie interrupted, coming in with the teatray, and Janet flew off to help,

The following afternoon, as Mrs. Ross sat by the window of the pretty drawing-room, watching Janet busy in the garden, for the weather was beautifully fine for late autumn, she saw Frank Raynor ride up. He jumped from his horse at the gate, and beckoned to the girl, and the two were soon deep in conversation.

"Hard luck, that," said John, coming behind the low rocking chair, and pointing to the pair.

"I'm just thinking what a handsome couple they'll make," replied the old lady.

"Unfortunately the Squire's not of your opinion. He wants no beggar-maid for his daughter-in-law," said John grimly. "Janet won't marry Frank, or even be engaged to him, without the old man's consent, and as I see no hope of that being forthcoming, there is no prospect of true love running smoothly. I'm sorry; Frank's a nice fellow."

" Janet's well born, a charming girl and a true gentlewoman. I don't see why the Squire should be implacable," cried the old

lady indignantly.

" To tell you the truth, he hates the very name of Denison. My poor old dad persuaded him to risk some of his precious gold in one of his speculations-some mine or other that he firmly believed was going to turn out an El Dorado. Unfortunately his hopes were not realised, and the worst of it is that the Squire believes my father knew all the time that the thing was a rotten con-That is most unjust, for the poor tellow was perfectly honest in his belief. I tancy they made a nice mess of it between them, for they had a fearful row, and the old man has had his knife in us ever since," and John shrugged his broad shoulders. " However, I'm hoping soon to clear off the mortgage on this place, and then I intend to tackle the Squire and find out the extent of his grievance."

"I'm more than surprised to hear all this; it was very different when I was last here. You must have had upfull work, and I think it real good of you to be bothered with an old woman, when you've so much to do. I guess you'd be lonely without Janet."

"Very," he said emphatically; "she's a sister in a thousand. I can't imagine being without her," "You should look out for a nice little wife, John. Sure enough that young man will carry her off some day. Forgive an old woman, but my own married life was so happy that I pity those who never find a mate."

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"If I only could find the right one—but I lost her years ago, and I've never cared for any woman since."

"Lost her! How, dear lad?" And the kind old face was full of interest.

"She went abroad; I've had no news of her for a long time. There was nothing binding between us; she may be married or dead for aught I know. I'm afraid, dear old friend, that you'll have to give up matchmaking on my behalf, for I'm a hopeless bachelor." And John lit his pipe with a determined effort to banish the vain longing that had come over him for the sight of a graceful girlish form, with a fair sweet face framed in golden hair and lit up by laughing brown eyes.

She had promised, when they said goodbye in the old vicarage garden, not to forget him. His little love of long ago. How his thoughts would wander back to old day dreams; while beside him Mrs. Ross nodded her wise old head, rocking and knitting away, and outside a tender voice whispered sweet words into Janet's pretty ears, and once more a certain ring was offered and refused, until it could be worn with the Squire's approbation.

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A FEW weeks later Mrs. Ross declared that she must go up to London for a few days.

The brother and sister demurred, but the old lady persisted; she had business in the City, she said, which must be attended to.

"But you'll be back for Christmas," cried John.

"Nothing will give me greater pleasure, and I want you to let me bring my young friend Mary with me. I've told you a lot about her, haven't I, Janet?"

"Of course, any friend of yours, dear godmother," answered Janet, inwardly wondering much what she had been told about "Mary," beyond the fact that she was a nurse who seemed to have quite won the old lady's heart; but Janet was one of the least curious of women, and asked no questions.

"I hope she's no fine lady," put in John.

"I'm not going to tell you anything about her, my lad; you shall form your own judgment."

Janet laughed merrily. "I do believe my little godmother's got some mighty scheme in her head, John."

The old lady chuckled to herself as she went upstairs to pack her bag.

"I never told you that I met Squire Raynor the other day when I went for a stroll," Mrs. Ross said, that same day, as she and Janet waited for the London midday express in the little station. "I'd quite a chat with him; I soon made him remember who I was, although he told Master Frank he'd never heard of such a person. He's very fond of his boy in his heart, Janet. I soon drew him out a bit, and he was real amiable when we parted. What do you think of that?"

"Fancy tackling the Squire," laughed the girl. "I wonder what you'll do next, you wonderful little person."

"Wait, dearie, and you shall see. Tell John to trust to old Auntie Ross and wait for Mary." And the train came steaming in and she was whirled away. Janet felt quite lonely as she turned slowly away from the deserted platform out into the high road. She had not gone far when hasty footsteps behind caused her to look round, and her colour rose, making her look quite pretty, as she saw Frank.

"What kind fate brought you here to-day, fair lady?" he asked as he took her hand.

She told him, and they walked on together in the direction of the farm, for he protested he had business with John, and although Janet doubted it, she was too happy to raise any objections.

"She's a wonderfully active old body, your godmother, Janet. I've quite taken a liking to her; she seems a real good sort,"

"I never saw her equal, Frank; she has wonderful energy. John says she's a very clever woman. Did you know that she met your father, and had a long confab with him?"

"I heard about it. Never was I more astonished. Only fancy, little girl; the pater has been quite a different man ever since. In the seventh heaven of bliss, and most astonishingly amiable. He mentioned John in the course of conversation last night, just in the old friendly way. I can't make him out. By Jove, here he is!" For at that



"' It's Christmas time, lad. . . Shake hands, and we'll start afresh '"-p. 127.

Drawn by

moment there was a clatter of hoofs, and the Squire rode up.

He raised his hat as he passed, and smiled at the astonished faces of the pair. He was a fine, hale old man, with a ruddy face and white hair, and looked his best on horseback.

They watched him until he was out of sight and then continued their way, laughing and talking together in that delightful fashion that is so interesting to lovers all the world over.



It was the day before Christmas. There had been a slight fall of snow, just, as Nannie said, "to make it more seasonable." John, coming in with a great bundle of holly, called Janet from her mince-pie making, to help him decorate the hall, when a bustle in the kitchen, and a shout from Molly, the dairymaid, proclaimed the arrival of the carrier, ever a welcome visitor at the farm, but especially so at Christmas time.

"Lots of good cheer for you; I be fair mazed at the packages!" cried the carrier. "I thought I'd make this way as soon as I cud when I found so many for you, sir, and I'm sure I wish you all the best of luck this Christmas, and a right good New Year," he went on, as he pocketed John's liberal tip and Nannie supplied him with refreshments. Leaving him to chatter to the maids, John and his sister, each with several parcels, disappeared into the inner room.

"I couldn't wait a minute longer; I'm just longing to open them!" cried Janet, her hands trembling with eagerness as she tugged at the strings.

John whipped out his knife.

"Oh!" said Janet rapturously, as she unwrapped a beautiful fur stole and mufi. "By Jove! Mr. Frank's been doing it." "It's not Frank!" And Janet, pink with excitement, looked at the address.

"A London post-mark! Who can have

sent it?"

John did not answer; he was busily engaged in opening a handsome carriage rug. "I think it must be Frank," he said, as another parcel was found to contain a tin of tobacco and box of cigars. "Who else would know my taste so well?"

Janet looked up from a dainty silk blouse

she had just unwrapped.

"I tell you, John, it is not Frank! I told him I would not accept presents until his father consents to our engagement. I would suspect my godmother, only I know the poor old lady could afford nothing like this. Why, those furs must have cost a mint of money alone! I wonder if some of father's old friends have remembered us?"

"It's a wonder they didn't think of us before this," said John, shaking his head. "No. I don't think that's the answer to

the riddle."

"Here's another parcel," said she, "but I know this writing well enough. Some new music from the Vicar. Kind old man. What a charming little note! He thanks me, John, for helping him in the parish; I'm sure I haven't done much, only gone to see a few sick folk now and then; but I can't understand the rest," and Janet stared at the crowded table.

"Please, Miss Janet," cried Molly at the door, "there's such beautiful things come

for us in the kitchen."

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Sure enough they found Nannie rejoicing over a nice warm shawl and dress piece, while Molly had a similar present.

But the day was closing in, and they had no time to linger, so, while John took himself off to outside duties. Janet hung up the holly and decked the old house in true Christmas fashion, wondering in her secret heart if Frank had sent the lovely presents in spite of her prohibition.

Her doubts were set at rest on that point, for just as they finished tea he appeared with a fine hare, a brace of pheasants, and denied all knowledge of the affair.

"My present is in my pocket, sweetheart," he whispered, as she went to the door with him. "I bought it when last in London. How long am I to wait?—I can't be patient for ever, darling."

"I would like to make peace between you and the Squire, Frank, not enmity," said she, blushing as she met those ardent blue eyes so full of love, and she added, gently:

" John needs me."

"Not more than I do. However," he went on in his gay way, "coming events cast their shadows before, and my prophetic soul tells me something is going to happen. Old John is whistling. Even Nannie is singing, or trying to. Presents are arriving by the dozen. And I will see you to-morrow by hook or by crook," And snatching a kiss, in spite of her protest, he was gone.

It was an ideal Christmas Day, with a clear, frosty air. Very sweet looked Janet in her new furs, and many admiring glances she received as, with her tall, handsome brother, she entered the old church that Christmas morning. And wonder of wonders !- the old Squire sat by Frank's side in the Hall pew, and almost petrified them by waiting in the porch as the congregation streamed out, to give them kindly Christmas greetings. Frank, with his gay smile, managed to get behind the old man, and wink at John, which nearly upset Janet's gravity; but they had no time to linger, for a telegram received that morning bade them expect Mrs. Ross at any time after one.

They had barely reached home when the toot of a motor was heard, and one of the farm lads came running, breathless with excitement, to say a grand motor-car was coming down the lane to the farm.

"Somebody asking the way, I suppose. I'll go to them, John, while you change your coat." And Janet, still in her furs, hurried

to the gate.

It was a magnificent car, driven by an immaculate chauffeur, and inside sat a charmingly pretty girl, beside a demure old lady, who was richly attired in sables and wreathed in smiles as she got a glimpse of her god-daughter's mystified face.

"I guess we're here at last, dearie," she said, as she got out. "And this is Mary."

"Why, Angela, Angela Lee!" gasped Janet, throwing her arms round the stranger's neck. "Where on earth have you come from? And why does my godmother call

you Mary?"

"Did you never hear that my proper name was Angela Mary? Oh, Janet, it's good to see you again," she broke off, hugging her bewildered friend. "Mrs. Ross, or Auntie, as I call her, always calls me Mary. You see, dear, I had to turn nurse when father died, and they dubbed me 'Nurse Mary,' but I'm still the same Angela you knew, and I nearly cried for joy when Mrs. Ross told me she was bringing me here this morning," she explained, as 'he two girls walked slowly up the garden-path, while Mrs. Ross, who had been giving directions to her chauffeur, soon followed them, chatting in her brisk way, as, entering the house, they made for the draw-

ing-room, where a great fire was burning

merrily.

"Go right away to the fire, Mary. You must be half-starved. Janet and I will hustle round to see about some retreshments," said the old lady, as John's step was heard, and with a meaning look at Janet she drew her out of the room.

John, attracted by the bustle of the arrival, was hurrying along the hall, looking

very handsome.

"Well, Auntie Ross, I'm glad you've kept your promise. A Merry Christmas!" and he bent low to kiss the kind old face.

"Just go in there, my laddie, and find your Christmas box." She pushed him into the room, and, closing the door, stole away with a very tender smile.

John stood transfixed as he caught sight of the fair face by the fire. "Angela!" he gasped at length, as he slowly advanced. "Angela, my best beloved, is it really you, or am I dreaming?"

"Really and truly, John," she said with a happy laugh, as she was folded in his arms, his little love, true and faithful all this time. He could hardly believe it, and he held her close to his wildly-beating heart.

"Angela, darling, if you only knew how I have longed for you. I hardly dared to hope ever to hold you again like this, and even now I'm only a poor man, sweetheart; but I'll work for you, and as long as you still care for me—why, nothing else matters."

"I only want you, John," she whispered.
"You've not altered much. The years have been kind to you, my Angela," he said fondly, after a long silence.

"John, why didn't you write?" she asked, as she lovingly stroked his hair and noted the grey threads here and there.

"I couldn't, my own, until I'd something to offer you. I am just about to pay the last of my poor father's debts, and the old home will once more be our own again; then I intended to try and find you, but——"

Here Janet entered, and while the two girls went upstairs to change for dinner, Mrs. Ross was left to explain matters to the bewildered John. When ill, in a nursing-home in Australia, she had made the acquaintance of Angela Lee, whom she persuaded to return with her to America first, and then on to England as companion. Angela was nothing loath, for her dearest wish was to get back to the old country.

"As soon as I mentioned your name, John, and that I was coming to Woodend," went on the old lady, "I saw by Mary's manner that she knew you. A few skilful questions and I guessed her secret, so I hustled her off to visit her people while I came on here to see if you'd found some new sweetheart, or were still free for the old love; and, John—while we're talking—what put it into your heads that I was badly off?"

"I understood you said so-something in your letter made Janet think so. She thought

you had lost some money."

"There are other losses besides financial ones. When my dear husband was taken from me I felt that I had lost all that made life worth living, and I fretted myself ill, but after a while I remembered that he had not only left me a very rich woman, but that he also had charged me with some work to do. He left you a special legacy, John!"

John stared down at her in amazement, What other surprises was she going to give him? Surely he had had enough for one day! His brain refused to take it in, and he began to think he must be dreaming, but the little figure seated in his mother's quaint sewing-chair was very real, and the gentle

old voice went on:

" Some years ago your father wrote to my husband, and told him that he'd bought some shares in a mine that had turned out a failure, and what had upset him the most was the fact that, through his persuasions, Squire Raynor had also speculated in the same way. It was an American affair, and a short time after Mr. Ross heard a rumour about this mine that led him to think there had been some mismanagement or foul-play somewhere, so he wrote to your father, asking for the necessary papers and permission to act for him in the matter. Poor Mr. Denison seemed to have lost heart, for he made a free gift of the shares to my husband, believing they were worthless. But my John-the same name as you, dear lad - went in person, and a wise expenditure of money, combined with his keen business acumen, led to the mine being worked. A new company was formed, and gradually the thing came to a successful issue,

"Those shares of your poor father's are yours absolutely, John! They are worth to-day twenty thousand pounds! This is the business that brought me to England. Brown and Brown, Lincoln's Inn, are the

UNAWARES

solicitors you must consult. And now, John, let me tell you how real glad I was when you and my god-daughter received me so kindly, when I let you think I was hard up. I shall never forget it. Janet's dowry will be my care. Mary and you will be like my own dear children. I expect Frank will claim his wife shortly, for when I told my good news to the Squire his grievance against his old riend seemed to melt away; of course, his shares are no longer the worthless paper he had deemed them."

John struggled with his emotion. £20,000! It seemed incredible! He could only take

the old hands in his and press them warmly, but she quite understood, and, to his relief, Janet came rushing in.

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"Oh, godmother!" she cried, throwing her arms round her. "How could you deceive us so? John, they came in her own motor, and she sent us those lovely things—Angela's been telling."

" John will have to build a garage, when he begins to make improvements, for I intend to spend a good deal of my time at Woodend, and I like quick travelling. I've taken a little flat in London, and when we are tired of quiet life we can run up there for a change; I want you young people to have a good time; a little holiday won't hurt after these years of stress. I expect we shall have plenty of shopping to do directly." And she glanced mischievously at Angela, who had just entered the room, looking charming in a black net dress, which, cut low, suited her dazzling complexion and fair hair.

What a merry little dinner party that was!—although John declared he was toe happy to eat, and could only gaze at Angela; but all were in the best of spirits when carriage wheels were heard, and Nannie ushered in Squire Raynor and his son. The old man walked straight up to John and held out his hand.

"It's Christmas time, lad; I've nursed a grudge too long. Our good friend here," and he pointed to Mrs. Ross, "tells me I was in the wrong. I misjudged your father. Shake hands, and we'll start afresh,"

John shook his hand heartily, and made way for the Squire beside him, but he had gone round to Janet and was whispering something that covered her with confusion.

"Kiss her, father; kiss your future



"He held her close to his wildly-beating heart."

Drawn by J. E. Satoliffe.

THE QUIVER

daughter!" cried Frank, " and then come and welcome Angela back. I expect we shall be relations directly!"

They sat chatting for a while, and then the lovers paired off, leaving the two old people sitting over the fire. John and Angela made for the drawing-room, but Frank, wrapping a shawl round his lady-love, took her into the garden. When he brought her back to tea a lovely diamond ring sparkled on her finger which soon caught John's eye.

Not to be outdone, he drew a plain gold band from his finger. "You shall wear this, Angela," he whispered, "for the present. Look, darling," and he held it to the light. In tiny letters was written: "As endless as my love for thee,"

Angela's eyes filled with tears as she slipped on the old-fashioned keeper, for she knew it was his mother's ring.

"I shall love it for her sake as well as yours," she murmured.

"You won't keep me waiting long, darling? Think of the years we've been apart,"

"We shall be all the happier, John, for having done our duty. Your place was here, and mine with my poor father. I could not have left him alone in a strange land," and as she looked up at him with her sweet, trustful smile. John knew she was right.

At supper that night there were several toasts drunk. The last proposed by Mrs. Ross was the one immortalised by Charles Dickens:

"God bless us all, every one."-

As they raised their glasses, Frank looked at Janet; she smiled, but her eyes were full, "What are you thinking about so earnestly,

sweetheart?" he whispered.

"Of my dear godmother. When I look at her I think of a certain verse in Holy Writ—'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers, for thereby some have entertained angels unawares,"



BRIGHTEST AND BEST

A New Setting to an Old Christmas Hymn

Words by REGINALD HEBER.

Music by ROLAND ROCERS, Mus Doc.

1. Bright-est and best of the sons of the morn-ing, Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;



Star of the East, the ho . ri . zon a . dorn . ing, Guide where our In .fant Re-deem-er is laid.



- a, Cold on His cradle the dew-drops are shining; Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall; Angels adore Him, in slumber reclining, Maker, and Monarch, and Saviour of all,
- Say, shall we yield Him, in costly devotion, Odours of Edom and offerings divine, Gems of the mountain, and pearls of the ocean. Myrrh from the forest, and gold from the mine?
- Vainly we offer each ample oblation; Vainly with gold would Hi, favour secure; Richer by far is the heart's adoration; Dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.
- Brightest and best of the sons of the morning. Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid; Star of the East, the horizon adorning. Guide where our Infint Redeemer is laid.



SHARING THE MANGER

A Christmas Meditation

By the Rev. RICHARD ROBERTS

"EXCEPT ye turn "—right back to the very beginning again—" and become as little children, ye can in no wise enter." The Kingdom of Heaven is the kingdom of the childlike spirit, that precious endowment which most of us have lost, which has this many a day been sepultured beneath the awful weight of the solemn benumbing wisdom that we foolishly suppose that experience has brought us, and which assuredly we must recover if we are not to miss the ineffable splendour and the unearthly beauty of the heritage into which we have been called. No greater tragedy has befallen any man of us than the passing of this childhood; no greater paradox is conceivable than that we should think we are the better for this loss; no greater foolishness than our boast of maturity in wisdom and judgment, that very maturity which has slaughtered imagination and robbed us of all sense of marvel and romance; and no greater wonder is there in the world than that we may yet recover what we have lost and become again "as little children."

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The Call to New Beginnings

This season of Christmas can bring us no more precious gift than the call to retrace cur steps and to go back to the beginning again. And if there be any who question the relevancy of this thought to this particular season, let me pray them to consider whether in truth this be not the whole sum of the matter. For what else was God about when He brought His Son to birth and cradled Him in the manger in that dingy outhouse of the Bethlehem inn, than doing for a hoary and decrepit world what His Son here bids all men do for themselves?

When Christ was born in Bethlehem, God was giving the world a new beginning, starting it all over again; and where, suppose you, should a race of men make a new start if not in a little child? That is the significance of the Incarnation-a wayward, broken, wandering race getting a new start-flesh and blood once more in swaddling clothes. That is God's way. Someone has said that the perseverance of the saints is an endless series of new beginnings. New beginnings-that is God's policy throughout all His dominions. Every day, every year is a new beginning. "Behold," this is the eternal decree, "I make all things new." Nature is full of it. History is simply the age-long tale of new beginnings; its course is punctuated from

beginning to end with renewals and revivels and revolutions.

And the one great central act of renovation—which is the symbol and the promise of the rest—is the Incarnation. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God"; but more than this was true: "Except the world of men be born again, it cannot see the Kingdom of God." And when the Son of Man took upon Him the common burden of manhood, and passed through the strait

all so natural, so satisfying a process, this seemingly spontaneous blossoming out of the puerilities of childhood into the maturity of manhood. Yet in this very process we are leaving behind us the best part of ourselves. It is good that as we leave childhood behind us we should leave childlishness, but it is not good that we leave childlikeness too, the essential low-liness and simplicity of the child-spirit. But we do so; we develop pride; the democracy of the child gives place to pride of birth and pride of place; the low-



The Child-spirit.

Photo: E. H. Hazel, Clevedon.

gate of human birth, the world was truly born again.

Recover the Child-spirit

Surely, therefore, we do best of all observe the Christmas season by laying ourselves open to this spirit of renewal.—by standing at the manger, not only to adore the Christ-child, but to share the manger with Him.—to recover the lost ground and become as little children again. We hardly realise how much we have lost by the passing of the child spirit from our lives. Sometime in the critical and perilous period between childhood and maturity we lose naturalness and lowliness and un-self-consciousness; and we do not know that we are doing so. It seems

liness of the child is superseded by pride of achievement and attainment; the openeved wonder of childhood gets overlaid by pride of intellect and pride of knowledge-we contract that fatal blindness which we call sophistication. We get to think we know a thing or two. And we leave far away in the distance the magic, the grace, the loveliness of the world of the child. There are few greater calamities than the loss of our faith in fairies. "Know you," asks Francis Thompson, "what it is to be a child? It is to be something very different from the man of to-day. It is to have a spirit yet streaming from the waters of baptism; it is to believe in love, to believe in loveliness, to believe in belief; it is to

be so little that the elves can reach to whisper in your ear; it is to turn pumpkins into coaches, and mice into horses, lowliness into loftiness, and nothing into everything, for each child has its fairy godmother in its own soul; it is to live in a nutshell and to count yourself the king of infinite space; it is

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"To see a world in a grain of sand, And a heaven in a wild flower, Hold infinity in the palm of your hand, And eternity in an hour."

Until we start fair from the footing of real genuine childlikeness, both the highest realisations of Christian experience and the clearest apprehension of Christian truth are closed to us. There is a memorable passage in which Jesus Christ thanks God that He hid these things from the wise and prudent and revealed them unto babes; and that, presumably, because the wise and the prudent could not understand them, and the babes could. The wise and prudent would have too many learned prejudices to look things straight in the face and to see them as they were; but the child suffered from no such handicap. He could accept them as they came, without having them distorted or discoloured by ill-digested masses of incomplete knowledge. God's method has not changed. The condition and the vehicle of revelation is still the heart of the babe.

Childlike Sensitiveness

What, then, are the marks of the childspirit?

The first is sensitiveness—and by this I mean a certain freshness and delicacy and plasticity of spirit. We know how the skin of the palm of the hand is hardened by the friction of instruments of toil or play. In the adult soul some analogous process has been going on and has dulled its receptiveness. Contact with the world has thickened the soul's cuticle, and we become increasingly impervious to impression. But in the child-spirit is so sensitive that it reacts to stimuli which do not make any impression upon us at all.

The late Principal Eliot of Harvard said once that "if a child or a dog, after looking you in the face, refuses from motives other than timidity to come to you, you had better go home and

examine yourself." I don't know about the dog; but I am quite sure about the child. I have seen it happen more than once in cases where I knew the child was right. And I am quite sure that this is the sensitiveness of innocency. It is essentially a moral thing; and it is because the pressure of the world-spirit on the market-place and in social life has, without our knowing it, led us into a life of compromise and subterfuge that we have gradually lost this sensitiveness. We cannot, without resolute vigilance, keep out the atmosphere in which we are compelled to live; and it is true of the great majority of us that we have not been as vigilant as we should and in the issue we have lost that moral sensitiveness which responds and reacts readily to the impressions it receives. And the loss of moral sensitiveness means the loss of spiritual sensitiveness as well.

When all is said and done, the two main avenues by which the truth of God reaches us are a sensitive conscience and a sensitive spirit. For it is not gained—this ultimate truth which illumines and vivifies all other truth—by argument or investigation, but by the direct communication of the Spirit of God to our spirits.

The Whiteness of Candour

The second quality of the child-spirit is candour. The original meaning of candour is whiteness. The word "candidate" is derived from the old Roman electioneering custom of putting the aspirants in a white toga; and the idea which it conveys in the present connection is that which it has in Kipling's poem on Gunga Din:

"But for all 'is dirty 'ide
'E was white, clear white, inside';

and when we want to express our appreciation of an honourable and upright man, we have come into the way of calling him a "white man." But the candour I am thinking of is rather the intellectual than the moral virtue. It is a posture of the mind in regard to our judgments. It is the quality of a mind which sets out upon its thinking without bias and without prejudice. It is very curious how crooked the course of a word's history may become. For, so far as we use candour in its relation to our judgments, it is rather to the expression than the formation of them. A man may arrive at the most perverse

and fallacious and one-sided judgment—and yet because he makes it vocal we call him candid. There is no virtue in speaking one's mind; there is generally far more virtue in being silent about it; the real virtue lies in the endeavour to arrive at a really pure judgment. That is the true candour.

Let me illustrate the point. Here is a scientific man with a pet theory. His temptation (and he sometimes falls into it) is to persuade the facts to support his theory. Now that is not candour. Candour demands that while he is looking at the facts he should put his theory aside, and draw from the facts the inference they naturally point to—and take the consequences, even if they involve smashing up his theory.

Here is another man with a pet theological view. He interprets Scripture in the way that suits his theory; true candour lets the Bible tell its own story, and takes whatever consequences may ensue to its own orthodoxy. The candid mind is the mind that is cleansed from all prejudices and all bias, a mind that thinks truthfully, a mind that does not pervert facts or twist texts to suit its own purpose, that does not impose its own story upon the data, but lets the data tell their own story. It is a pretty big task to get a mind like that; and the child has it simply because he has had no time to gather prejudices.

The Docility that can Learn

Lastly, and as the necessary sequel to all this—docility is a quality of the child-spirit. It is a phase of its humility; as, indeed, candour is. For it is necessary to real candour that no man should presume that he holds an absolute touchstone of truth.

There is no form of pride so disastrous as the pride of intellectual certainty, especially when it takes the form of theological cocksureness. That was the trouble of the Pharisees. They had nothing to unlearn; and, in consequence, they had nothing to learn. They lacked teachability—and so far as the wonderful endlessly expansive truth of God is concerned, this lack is a positive catastrophe. It blocks up the mind. The curious fact about

unteachableness is that it is not the mark of those who are for ever learning, and are, therefore, truly learned, but of those who have stopped learning. That is why a little learning is a dangerous thing. It is apt to mistake itself for perfect knowledge. The people who are readiest to pass judgment upon a new idea are the people who are least capable of passing it—the little people who do not know and never will know, simply because they think they know. The humble mind is known by its docility, its teachableness. It is essentially the open mind; and if you want to know what it is like, go and talk to a child of six.

Sensitiveness, candour, docility, these are the essential marks of the spirit of the child—and they are the conditions of entering the treasure-house of spiritual experience and divine truth. But they are not to be got merely by putting them on.

A Miracle Wanted

The recovery of the child-spirit belongs to the region of miracle. "Can," asked the bewildered Nicodemus—"Can a man enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" He had grasped the fact that there was a miracle somewhere in the process; but he could not place it. The child-spirit comes back to us by no facile somersault, but through a profound and searching operation of the Spirit of God upon us; and that not once for all, but as a constant process. So long as we are subject to the pressure of worldly scales of value and modes of judgment, so long is our childlikeness in jeopardy. Every morning that dawns is not too often to make a fresh start, to return to the base, to submit ourselves to the rejuvenating ministry of the Spirit of God. And of all the year's days there is assuredly none in which it is more fitting than it is this day that we should shed the blinding ponderosities of a premature maturity, and ask for that miraculous grace which will wipe out these sterile and benumbing middle years, and restore to us those fair years which once were, but which the canker-worm and the caterpillar and the palmer-worm have eaten, the years when our hearts were pure and tender, and the Kingdom of Heaven was very near to us.

CAN THE DEAD LIVE?

A Story of Christmas in the Sad "'15"

By HELEN WALLACE

OVER the vast, rolling slopes, and the rounded shoulders of the fells, the snow lay deep, blurring and effacing every outline, like the cerecloth upon a dead face. Every landmark was blotted out, and yet the smother of purplish cloud which brooded low over the drear whiteness of the snowy waste seemed to betoken another downfall with the darkness. And darkness was not far off, though low in the south-west, beyond the level grey line of the distant sea, a brief vellowish flare still lingered. It flickered, faded, vanished, as if leaving the world to its fate: and, like the dirge of dving day, a sudden wind sprang up, shook the heavy air, and passed moaning away over the frozen fells.

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As if that eerie, wailing blast had been a call to action, a solitary traveller, who had paused either to take breath after his struggle through the snow, or to take counsel with himself, now roused himself with a shake of the broad shoulders, on which a few circling snowflakes were already falling. He turned from the far-off darkening sea-rim at which he had been eagerly gazing, and glanced towards the sheeted hills, looming pale and ghostly under the lowering cloud-pall.

"I must e'en take my chance. I can't reach Seahaven to-night, so it's a choice between a white winding-sheet here and a rope, it may be, unless they grace me with the axe. They're not likely to seek the hare in the deserted form; and if they've left old Foster at Featherstonehaugh, he'll find me some corner for the night; and if not—well, I must risk it! While there's life there's hope."

So his swift thoughts ran as he set his face to the hills, and pushed on again through the snow, the only moving speck in the white wilderness. He wore the coarse grey homespun of the dalesmen and the "maud," or shepherd's plaid, common to both sides of the Border; but the shoulders under its muffling folds had none of the countryman's slouching stoop, nor were the quick glances he cast around him akin to the peasant's

slow, ruminating gaze. Yet he seemed to be on familiar ground, and to steer his way by some instinct so as to avoid the deepest drifts. But it was a desperate battle against the merciless cold, the clogging snow, and the dead, numbing weight of his weariness; and he was all but spent when, at last, he floundered to the top of a long rise. Then he stopped dead, and a low whistle of surprise and dismay came from his stiff lips.

Below him, in a sheltered cup of the fells, lay a great grey house, a broad flood of light pouring from its many windows out into the deepening gloom. A cheerful sight on such a night, and yet it struck the solitary wayfarer motionless.

"Gad, that bodes ill for me!" he muttered. "The leal houses in the dales are not keeping Christmas Eve in this fashion."

And, indeed, there was but little Christmas cheer amid the Cumberland and Westmoreland fells, as the "'15" darkened to its dreary close. Preston had fallen, Sheriffmuir had been fought and lost, my Lords Nithisdale and Derwentwater were in the Tower, the young Prince had fled back to France, and the loyal dalesmen who had taken up arms for his cause were slain or in prison, or in hiding for their lives. Yet Featherstonehaugh, whose Squire, young Anthony Featherstone, had gone north to join the Prince and my Lord Mar, was holding high revel to-night! What did it The watcher's white face grew mean? grim; then for a second time that night he came to a swift decision.

"Needs must!" he muttered. "I'll try the 'priest's window.' Though Randall knows about it, it may not be barred within."

Between breathless sliding and stumbling he was soon at the bottom of the steep slope; then, with an assured step, he made his way round the chapel wing to a grated window about a man's height from the ground. He clambered up, and, leaning all his weight upon the central stanchion, the casement, bars and all, slid slowly down into a groove in the thick wall. He sprang in and softly drew the window into place again, and then went quickly along a narrow, winding, vaulted passage, emerging into a broader, matted one. He had the good luck to encounter no one, and he walked boldly to the steward's room.

"Now I wonder if I'll find Foster here," he thought as he noiselessly opened the

door.

An old man, who was the only occupant of the room, looked up from his writing. He stared for a startled second at the dripping, muffled figure; then he sprang to the door, locked it, and turning to the new-comer with joy and anxiety and distress warring in his face, uttered under his breath:

"Squire Anthony! God help us all, why

did vou venture here?"

"I thought I'd like to spend Christmas in my own house, and all the more since it's like enough to be my last," said Anthony Featherstone, throwing off his soaking plaid; and neither cold, nor fatigue, nor the mortal peril in which he stood could wholly quench the gay courage of his look.

"It'll be the last, sure enough, if Mr. Randall knows you're here," said old Foster, fairly wringing his hands. "And it's his house now, Mr. Anthony, in spite of all that Squire Musgrave and your friends could do."

"I expected that," said Anthony gravely.
"I knew when we had to draw off at Sheriffmuir that it was good-bye to Featherstone-haugh, but I did not think Randall would have taken possession so soon."

"He snapped at it like a famished cur at a bone, did Mr. Randall. He's hungered for it long enough. This is his house-warming to-night. He's giving a great masked ball in the French fashion, and that's such a ferlie (wonder) here that in spite of the snow, and what many folks think of him, all the countryside has come for it."

"Then Mistress Anne Musgrave must be here," broke in Anthony eagerly. "Foster, I must see her," laying a sudden hand on the

steward's arm.

"Oh, Mr. Anthony!" wailed the old man.

"And me at my wits' end what to do with
you! It's a marvel that a dozen folk
haven't been at the door already."

"At least Randall won't come. He'll be too full of his new dignities. He'll send for you if he wants you; and to any other one I'm Gaffer Plumstead, from over Lowbarrow Fell, come to see you about some sheep. See?" And with a laugh Anthony hunched his plaid over his shoulders, and crouched low over the fire. "We must risk something. Away and fetch Mistress Anne—I know she'll come. You won't get rid of me till you do."

After a doubtful moment Foster hastened away, and Anthony Featherstone sat in the house of his forefathers, a fugitive and an outcast, listening to the hurrying footfalls without. He knew he was doing a mad thing. Any moment might bring discovery and betrayal; but his life was forfeit already, and to throw it away, if need be, seemed at that moment a light price to pay for one

more sight of his love.

The handle turned. He pulled up the shrouding plaid, but flung it back with a low, exultant laugh as a slim figure in a hooded cloak was ushered in by Foster. The girl let the cloak sink from her slight shoulders, and to Anthony it was as if the sun had risen in glory upon the bleak and darksome world. The dim little room was flooded with the radiance of her gracious presence, her fair youth, and the starry shining of her sweet eyes. Without a word the young man took her into his arms; without a word she clung to him in a rapture that was an agony. Speech was not needed between them. Into that supreme moment neither past nor future intruded : the present was all and enough. If such moments could last! But it did not need Foster's anxious cough to bring them back to earth again.

"So my dear cousin has taken possession," said Anthony. "He may want more than house and lands, Anne," significantly.

"And that he shall never have!" said the girl passionately. "You are king here," laying her hand on her quick-heaving breast. "No King George can dispose of this as he has done with poor Featherstonchaugh."

"God bless you, sweet!" exclaimed Anthony, uplifted and yet utterly humbled by the clear devotion in her steadfast eyes. "I'm but a sorry king for such a noble kingdom. And what right have I to lay waste your life? What hope can I hold out?" His voice broke. "And then—your father—"

"Not even for my father will I betray my king," said Anne with the same high look. "But he has been working for you with my Lord Fenwick and many more."

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"'Gad, that bodes ill for me!' he muttered. 'The leal houses are not keeping Christmas Eve in this fashion'"-p. 133.

Drawn by John Cameron.

THE QUIVER

Then she suddenly broke off. "But we waste time," she uttered breathlessly, as an anguish of terror leaped into her eyes. "Oh, Anthony, my love, I feared—I hoped you were already beyond the seas!"

"And so I should have been, sweet. A boat is waiting for me at Scahaven, but it

Anthony, 'tis life or death for me too—think
—think!"

"The pricst's wing—the chapel—none are likely to go there to-night," suggested Anthony.

"'Tis all locked up—he keeps the key," said Foster, shaking his head. There was no need to ask who

he was.

"Then I must e'en go back the way I came, and trust to find shelter in some outhouse for the night, and then—hey for the sea and safety in the morning! With such a mob of coaches here, none will notice another stableman, said Anthony, when various anxious suggestions had been made and dismissed.

"You can't," said the steward, and his whisper was verv with dread. shrill " He would not bar the window, but he sets a guard there every night; 'twas a marvel you got in. A little later and you'd have fallen plump into their hands. I'm sure he had hopes of entrapping you."

"He's got his wish, then; my dear cousin is really too successful," said Anthony with a muttered oath. Then, turning swiftly to Anne: "My dear love, you must not

stay here. Never fear, I shall find some way out. I haven't played hide-and-seek with all the king's horses and all the king's men since Sherifimuir for nothing. If there's no other way, Gatter Plumstead will take his chance through the kitchen rout; and if that fails, well "with a smile which mocked at death and danger—"you've made me the blithest man in the country to-night. I



" 'You are king here,' she said, laying her hand on her quick-heaving breast"—p. 13:

Drawn by John Cameron.

was not in mortal power to drag myself there through the snow to-night, so I thought I'd e'en spend the night in my own house, come what might; but if I had known what awaited me here. I'd have come through fire and through water, let alone snow!" the jubilant note ringing in his voice again.

"But you must hide!" exclaimed Anne, even her lips blanching. "But where? Oh,

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wouldn't change my kingdom for King George's crown and throne."

He caught her hand to his lips. There was a scuffle of feet without and a loud rap on the door. Anthony thrust Mistress Musgrave behind him, while he glanced round for anything which might serve as a weapon. Though what would one avail? With a despairing look Foster went quaveringly to the door. It was only a demand for instructions, but the man without grumbled. "And your door locked, Master Foster, on a night like this!" and seemed inclined to dispute the passage.

"Tis Jarvis, the new under-steward—a prying knave," said Foster querulously as he re-locked the door.

Those within breathed again, but it was clear that it was time to be gone.

Anne suddenly turned to Foster, her eyes kindling.

"Is the great hall lit up yet? No! Then let none come to it till I give you warning. Will you trust yourself to me?" looking pleadingly at Anthony. "I believe I can find you a hiding-place till midnight, and one that none will dream of. The lights are all to be extinguished then; we are to unmask, and a great procession is to enter with torches. I warrant you there will not be a soul in Featherstonehaugh who will not want to share in the sight. Even the 'priest's window' will be unguarded then, and the 'priest's steps' lead down to it, don't they, from behind the panelling in the hall, near the chimney-piece-behind old Sir Ralph's armour? Then-" breathlessly.

"Do what you will with me," said Anthony gaily, "so long as you rid our good Foster of me."



The great hall at Featherstonehaugh later that night was a sight talked of for long years afterwards, and the splendour of the pageant, its glow of light and colour, was heightened not only by the remembrance of the wan, weary world of snow without, but by the contrast between the silken throng of guests and the dim banners, all torn and stained, and the trophies of weapons and suits of mail which lined the old walls. Not only had all the gentry from far and near been bidden, but the Featherstone tenants and the farmer-folk for miles around

crowded the carved galleries and gazed their fill upon the show. But it was not mere empty gazing; there was abundant Christmas cheer—good hearty swilling and guzzling for the commonalty, and rare French wines and dainties for the gentlefolk.

None should be stinted that night, for it was Randall Loder's great hour-the triumph of his ambition. It was the climax, too, of years of crafty scheming, of secret treason against his unsuspecting kinsfolk, of deliberate double-dealing with St. Germains and Hanover, till the success of either party should induce him to cast in his lot on the winning side. He had been in his early teens, and had already reckoned himself the heir of Featherstonehaugh, before Anthony was born; and ever since he had regarded his cousin as a usurper. He had skilfully made use of the old loyal traditions of the house, and played upon Anthony's Jacobite leanings and generous, impulsive nature, till the younger man had openly declared for "the king over the water." Then the bright bubble of a successful rising had burst; Anthony, the hated supplanter, was a hunted fugitive, and Randall reaped his reward.

Randall had never had Anthony's perfect health and reckless daring; he had never been popular as his cousin with his open nature and gallant manner had been; and yet all the best blood of the countryside had come to swell his triumph. Little wonder that Randall, flushed with his success, was ready to think that night that the one other prize he coveted in life was within his grasp too; that as he had successfully robbed Anthony Featherstone of house and lands, he might rob him of love too. True, Anne Musgrave had shown him scant favour, and had already declined his suit; but what did a girl's "No" matter? Her father, Squire Musgrave, was a staunch Hanoverian; and though, for old friendship's sake, he had been bestirring himself on Anthony's behalf, he would not be unwilling to have a true patriot, and the master of Featherstonehaugh to boot, for his son-in-law.

In spite of his uncertain health—those strange moments of dizzy weakness when the world seemed to slip away from him, and which his fierce pride strove to conceal—Randall Loder was a fine figure of a man, and as he moved among his guests in his rich dress, many an eye followed him. As

he opened the ball with a fair mask, whom, in spite of her shrouding domino, he knew to be Anne, the man was "fey," as they say in the North; he trod on air, he seemed floating in a blissful dream. And that sense of unreality was increased by his surroundings—the voluminous dominoes of every hue which enveloped men and women alike and fluttered wing-like with the movements of the dance, and the black masks which gave a strange mystery to familiar faces, and through whose eye-slits bright eyes flashed allurement or showed a mocking gleam.

The stately minuet over, he had perforce to relinquish his partner, for whom there were many claimants. She had availed herself of the privileges of a masquerade, and had only responded to him with the conventional raillery in the customary high falsetto voice. But when midnight struck, when the Christmas bells rang out, and after the brief eclipse the lights would blaze out again, he would speak to Anne Musgrave face to face, Till then he could afford to wait.

The night was wearing on to the decisive moment. Never had he felt so conscious of vivid life. The blood was racing in his veins, like the heady, sparkling wine which was being poured out without stint for his guests, when someone gently touched his arm. It was Jarvis, the under-steward. He was cautiously tendering a bulky packet, bearing the Government seal.

"The courier has but just come. He should have been at Musgrave Hall by noon, but he's been hours on the way, and when he found Squire gone, he came on here. It's urgent, it seems; so if your honour will give it to Squire, with your permission I'll see to the fellow. He's fair done."

Randall took the packet with a nod. Master and man understood each other. After an instant's thought, he threaded his way to one of the tall windows, and, stepping into the deep embrasure, let the heavy curtain fall between him and the gay throng. Hastily he broke the seal. No matter; he had its facsimile, and could easily renew the impression. Then he cast his eye over the documents, his quick mind swiftly disentangling the facts from the formal longwinded phraseology. Then a bitter, stifled oath broke from him.

The packet held Mr. Secretary's answer to the petition urged on Anthony Featherstone's behalf by such whole-hearted Government men as my Lord Fenwick, Squire Musgrave, and other loval gentlemen of the North. But that answer made Randall grind his teeth. Anthony Featherstone's life was to be spared. Considering the powerful interest made for him, Randall could not be so greatly surprised at that, though it filled him with a fury of disappointment and unglutted revenge. But there was worse still. Anthony was not doomed to banishment, which was the most lenient fate meted out to prominent rebels; and while for the present he was still stripped of lands and dignities, he was even to be restored to them, "subject to his good conduct, if our trusty supporter, Randall Loder or Featherstone, should die unwed or childless."

The man clutched at the heavy curtain to steady himself under this blow. The quick blood, which had been rioting to a dance measure, surged up to his brain in a wave of flame. Voices and laughter and music were drowned in a thunderous roar which filled all the air.

Then slowly—slowly the tumult subsided, and he found himself leaning, spent and breathless, against the heavy window frame. The joyous music rang out again, clear and loud, and hope and courage flashed up once more. That final clause was a piece of Mr. Secretary's malice. He had ever been an unfriend, in spite of all Randall's services -doubtless he had had wind of some of his intrigues; but Loder had not the remotest intention of dying unwed, and who knew whether Anthony were still alive to claim the indulgence, which need not be made public at once? There was, indeed, a rumour that he was skulking about the fell-country; and Anne might readily be made to believe that her wedding with such a loyal Hanoverian as the master of Feathers stonehaugh was the best means of ensuring the safety of its former owner. No; it was a shabby trick which had been played him; but he held the trumps yet.

Randall thrust the papers within his embroidered waistcoat, and was setting his lips to a smile before mingling with his guests again, when a familiar voice beyond the curtain made him pause.

"I had hoped to have had some answer to our petition lefore now," Squire Musgrave said. "Poor, dear Anthony 1 Tloved



"The man clutched at the heavy curtain to steady himself under this blow."

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the lad for his own and his father's sake, in spite of his politics; but at least he stuck to them openly, and not for what he might gain by them."

"Ay," said old Lord Fenwick. "I've had to rub my eyes once or twice to-night; I've always been expecting to see Anthony. Well, old Sir Ralph yonder has seen many a strange sight under this roof, but I'll warrant he never expected to see the Christmas revels here led by anyone but a Featherstone. I know they called cousin with Randall, and he has a share of the blood; but he's only a half-breed, after all."

As he spoke he glanced across the hall at the figure of a mailed knight, raised like a statue of steel upon a pedestal, the complete armour of Sir Ralph Featherstone, the crusading ancestor, who, with Richard the Lionheart, had fought the battles of the Cross on the sacred fields of Palestine. Through all the centuries he had stood there by the great fireplace like the guardian of the hearth.

"Ay, talk of men turning in their graves! Tis enough to bring the old fellow back,

and make him come down off his pedestal," said Musgrave in a tone of half-hearted jest, in which there was yet a strain of bitter earnest.

"Isn't there some old saw about that? That if there were a traitor at Featherstone-haugh, the old crusader would appear and deal with him, and announce his death?—

"If Featherstone's driven from Featherstonehaugh, Ye crusader will bring ye traitor to lawe."

Isn't that how the jingle runs? According to our opinions, I suppose we ought to call Anthony the traitor, but I can't fit such a name to the lad," said Fenwick.

"H'm, no," said Musgrave significantly.
"'Tis not treason such as Anthony's that
his house need be ashamed of."

They moved away, and Randall, with tightened lips, slowly parted the curtains and stepped forth from the recess. As his glance roamed over the moving groups of dancers, like a tulip-bed swayed by a soft breeze, his eyes, too, were involuntarily drawn to that shining panoply of steel, rising beyond them and seeming to dominate the revels. It was as familiar to him as

his own face. How often as a child playing in the hall, when the evening shadows were darkening, he had stolen past it with beating heart, fancying that there was really some grim and awful presence within the hollow mail, that he saw the gauntleted hand move, or that through the closed visor there gleamed—

Gad! What was that?

He staggered back. As he was a living man, he had seen, for one fell instant, the flash of fierce eyes through the slits of the visor instead of black emptiness.

"I'm not myself to-night. That old dotard's maunderings have put crazy notions in my head. 'Tis but some trick of the light. As well expect that old Sir Ralph will take bodily possession of his empty armour again, and come clanking down to confront me, as old Fenwick would have it. Pshaw! Away with such childish folly!"

The great moment was at hand now. He strode across the hall to the hearth and placed himself beside the pale blue domino

which he knew shielded Anne.

"Fair mask," he said, "I am come to claim your promise to lead the dance with me, when presently we shall unmask. Gad! I shall be glad when we see each other face to face, for I am beginning to see eyes and only eyes everywhere. Just now I was ready to swear I saw eyes gazing at me through old Sir Ralph's visor," with a laugh.

He had put his folly into words to rid himself finally of it, and next instant it was wholly forgotten. Under the loose silken folds of the domino he had caught the girl's unwilling hand, and at his words he felt the sudden wild leap of the pulse within his clasp. He smiled. Mistress Anne was not so cold as she would fain seem.

"Who knows but he will unmask too, when the lights shine out again? What would we see, think you?" And the shrill, forced voice from under the mask broke into a laugh, which rang cracked and false—a laugh born of sheer desperation. Nerve,

if not courage, was at the breaking point from the long strain of those endless hours when she must laugh and bandy jests with her fellow-revellers, as if she were as lighthearted as they. How Anne had blessed the mask which had hidden her tortured face! But it must soon be thrown off, and what then? Would her wild plan succeed? What, indeed, would the lights reveal?

"You will at least surely lead me to the head of the room; that much I may demand. This is not the place to start your triumphal procession," she went on in the same high tone of unnatural gaiety, and in her tum casting a swift glance at the mailed figure towering above them like a pillar of steel.

"Where you will; you have but to command," said Randall gallantly. But ere they could move a step—Crash!—the music expired in one mighty chord, and darkness fell upon the hall. Instantly there arose a hubbub of excited sound, bubbling laughter, the scuffling of feet, little giggling shrieks.

Suddenly an awful cry clove the confused babel, and smote the storm of gay noises

to dread silence.

"Lights—lights!" called half a dozen voices; and at that moment the great doors were flung wide, a stately march rang out from the musicians' gallery, and to the pomp of its swelling strains a long train of richly liveried men paced in, each bearing

a great ruddy flambeau.

The lights fell on a changed scene. The dominoes were gone like veiling clouds, and men and women shone out resplendent in gold and gems and rainbow colours. The black vizards were thrown aside, but it was only to show pale, attrighted faces, for there, by the great canopied fireplace, was a sight which smote women to their knees, and struck muttered oaths from the men, or words of half-forgotten prayer. There stood Randall and Anne Musgrave in her sumptuous dress of white and gold. He was still convulsively grasping her hand. His face was like the dead; for there—there-fronting them-was it a monstrous delusion?-was every mother's son of them going mad?there stood a mailed figure, erect, appalling; and the pedestal whereon Sir Ralph had stood so long was empty!

A gasp of horror came from every throat; the coolest stood confounded, for there was no gainsaying what every eye saw. But there was no time for thought. From the point hours with light-lessed tured, and ceed? o the nphal high turn figure eel. com-t ere nusic kness ose a ghter, ieks. fused noises lozen doors out the in of

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"A gasp of horror came from every throat. From the closed visor a voice rang out clear and unearthly."
832

Drawn by John Cameron.

closed visor a voice rang out clear and unearthly from the hollow of the casque, and echoed up to the oaken roof.

"Traitor!" it cried. The steel-clad arm, the gauntleted hand, rose menacingly, and, as if he had been struck down by that iron hand, Randall sank to the ground without sigh or sound.

Anne fell on her knees and lifted the fallen head. The livid face told its own tale. The awful avenger raised hasty hands, and, plucking off the steel casque, showed to the amazed assemblage the handsome head, the gallant face of Anthony Featherstone, as white now as the fallen man's.

"Before God, I meant him no harm!" he cried. "I thought but to escape by the secret way in the moment's darkness, but there was scant time, and when the lights came, and I saw his face again, I could not refrain myself. Now it is he who has not escaped!"

In the knightly armour of his great ancestor, he stood a noble figure under the arms of his house, blazoned on the canopy above him. In the stress of the moment he had forgotten that he was still an attainted fugitive; but in truth there was no man there, gentle or simple, who would have raised a hand against him.

"You say true. He has not escaped," said old Musgrave solemnly, as he put his hand within Randall's embroidered vest, only to find dead stillness there. "God pity him! He has been 'brought to lawe' indeed," with a shudder.

The ghastly shock, coming at the climax of the high-keyed excitement of the night, had been too much. The crafty heart, the wily brain, were now for ever quiescent.

As the old Squire withdrew his hand he brought with it a packet of papers with the seals newly broken. Involuntarily he glanced at it.

"Why, 'tis for me!" he exclamed. "Fenwick, 'tis the answer to our petition," he said in an agitated voice. Next moment, forgetful, in the revulsion of feeling, of the motionless form still stretched at his feet, he cried: "Anthony, you may doff your mail; you're a free man!" Then, waving the paper toward the crowding faces in the gallery: "You're the leal tenants of a real Featherstone again!" And a shout broke out which made the lights rock and swar.

Anne pitifully spread her handkerelief over the dead face, hiding it from the glare of the torches which were to have lit his triumph. Anthony caught her hand and drew her to his side, and held her there in the hush of a great joy and a great awe, while in the silence that fell upon the hall as the man who had thought to lord it there was borne away, there came, thin and faint, over the snow-bound world without, the pealing of the Christmas bells.

The tension broke. Anthony turned to the girl at his side, and at his look the pallor fled from her face.

"I shall spend my Christmas at Featherstonehaugh, after all," he cried exultantly. "I owe it all to you."



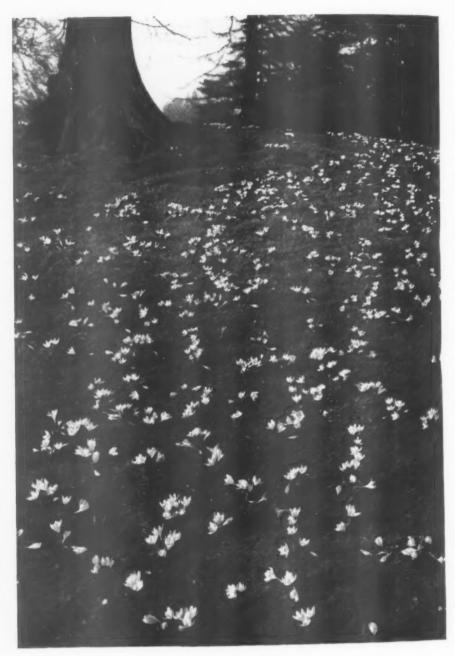
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"The golden crocus. First of Spring's gay flowers."



By G-Clarke Nuttall, B-Sc

CON

WITH NINE ILLUSTRATIONS
PHOTOGRAPHED IN COLOUR
DIRECT FROM NATURE.

(By)

HEssenhigh Corke, FRPS FRHS

"Nature never did betray
The heart that loved her: 'tis her privilege
Through all the years of this our life to lead
From joy to joy; for she can so inform
The mind that is within us: so impress
With quietness and beauty; and so lead
With loity thoughts, that neither evil tongues,
Rash jucgments, nor the sneers of selfish men
Shall e'er prevail against us or disturb
Cur cheerful faith that all which we behold
Is tull of blessings."

"NORDSWOFE

NATURE'S CALENDAR

With Nine Illustrations photographed direct from Nature by the "Lumiere"
Autochrome process,

DARKNESS before dawn, hushed waiting before birth, and so-winter before spring. But the "dead of the year" is only dead in the sense that it is absolute quiescence before the quickening into life, the resting time that prepares for a glad springing into action. The most complete repose of the year starts with December. when come those first hours of sleep in which tired Nature sinks into the deepest oblivion; when a chill like death creeps into the earth, when plant-life is on the ebb, storms shake the land, and, as the month draws the darkness closer and closer around it like an enveloping shroud, the shadow of the longest night falls, Gardens are barren, desolate the field and hedgerow save for a few laggards-a sprig of groundsel, a spike of dead nettle flower -that have outstaved their time, and only the perpetual evergreen of the holly and the vew, of the ivy and the laurel, gives a hostage to the future.

"The Dead of the Year"

Still, bleak and drear though "chill December" may be—

"Yet he through merry feasting which he made, And great bonfires, did not the cold remember, His Saviour's birth his mind so much did glad,"

sang Edmund Spenser when Elizabeth was Queen, and for us, as for him, December -"the dead of the year" enshrines one of our chief festivals of joy. And because at any period of rejoicing joy naturally expresses itself in the gathering of the best the land can offer to deck house and person, so Christmas joy led to Christmas decoration with the taking tribute of earth's products of the season-the shining, red-twinkling holly, the sombre yew, the more cheerful laurel. Now there is nothing inherently Christian in this custom of Christmas decoration; the eld pagans gathered boughs and kept their Saturnalia at this season long before Christmas was thought of; but Christianity read a new meaning into it, as an old writer explained: " So our Churches and homes decked with

bayes and rosemary, holly and ivy and other plants which are always green, winter and summer, signify and put us in mind of His Deity that the Child that was now bern is God and Man, who should spring up like a tender plant, should always be green and flourishing and live for evermore."

A Decorative Rivalry

In olden days a curious rivalry was imagined to exist between the various plants chosen for decorations and sometimes one, and sometimes another, was exalted into the first place. An old carol of the early fifteenth century thus champions holly as opposed to ivy:

"Nay Ivy! nay, it shall not be I wys: Let Holy hafe the maystrey as the maner ys, Holy stond in the halle favre to behold: Ivy stond without the dore; she ys full sore a cold."

and concludes with a very quaint disparagement;

"Holy hath byrdys a ful fayre flok.

The Nightingale, the Poppyngy, the gayntyl Lavyrok.*

Good Ivy! what byrdys ast thou? Non-but the Howlet that cryes' How!'"

The mistletoe, now showing as green bushes upon bare boughs and so sought for secular decoration, is never admitted into our churches, and that because it has never been able to free itself from association with pagan gods, though ivy, once dedicated to Bacchus, retains no such stigma. It is really a remarkable plant, outstanding at this season of the year-and out of mind for the rest of it when it is apt to merge into the foliage of its host. Possessing root, stem, leaves, flowers and fruit, it yet never has an independent life, but always lives upon some tree, and its continued existence upon the face of the earth largely rests with a bird ally-the thrush. In this "dead of the year" its white luscious berries specially appeal to

· Skylark.

"Where Winter wields His icy scimdar, "-Wordsweeth



"Winter's hand Spreads wide her hoary mantle o'er the land." "Tw.

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the palate of this bird and, greedily eaten, the hard little seeds they contain pass out unharmed with the viscid droppings. When they fall, as is not unlikely, upon the branch of a congenial tree, such as an apple, hawthorn, or poplar, such a tree, in fact, as the thrush visited for the berries, they run a little to the side or under part of the branch before drying and cementing the seed to the bark. This is why the mistletoe so often appears to grow out of the under side of a branch.

In the spring the seed germinates and puts out a rootlet which, whatever its position, always turns towards the branch, and in time penetrates the bark, spreading itself at the surface into a regular disc for attachment. Nothing more can be seen for a season or two beyond, perhaps, a little swelling at the point, but the rootlet is growing rake-like within the bough.

Then one day a tiny stem appears, and a pair of green leaves follow and, fed by the sap drawn from its host, it rapidly establishes itself as a bush in the air.

It is not generally known that each mistletoe plant is single-sexed, either a male or a female, and though both bear tiny green flowers, only the male produces the fertilising pollen, and the female the much-desired berries,

The Ubiquitous Mistletoe

It is useless trying to free a tree of its parasite mistletoe by cutting that off, as if that is done the roots will send out a number of fresh shoots, and the tree become the prey of many instead of one. Near Vienna there may be seen poplars beset by thirty or more large mistletoe bushes and fifty or more smaller ones, so that in their winter bareness they look simply like evergreen mistletoe trees. If one wishes to grow mistletoe for oneself, it is only necessary to squeeze a berry about Christmas time on to a suitable tree —an apple is one of the best. No incision is necessary, the thick juice of the berry setting like glue and attaching the seed. "As the day lengthens, the cold strengthens," says the proverb, and so

"Then came old January, wrappéd well
In many weeds to keep the cold away;
Yet did he quake and quiver like to quell,
And blowe his nayles to warm them if he
may,"
—SPENSER.

Slumber before the Dawn

Nature's sleep continues, but it is no longer the increasing lethargy of December, but slumber that stirs before awakening, for here and there the New Year is greeted with a new birth, as when the stiff, dull, resting catkins of the hazel suddenly transform into dancing tassels of gold, or the yellow jasmine produces its gilded stars. Out of the hazel catkins the yellow pollen dust flies winging its way on the nipping wind to find, if may be, its complement in those curious tiny crimson tufts that are the female flowers, and give rise eventually to the nuts of autumn days. But its quest this month is in vain—it is before its time, and its mission is uselessnot in these bleak days does the softer sex of the hazel hazard its future and jeopardise its offspring. For January is by rights the coldest month of the year, the month of snow, and a mild January, as proverb lore reiterates over and over again, is a thing to be reprobated. "A January spring is worth naething."

" If the grass grows in Janiveer It grows the worse for't all the year,"

says it, and adds the dire foreboding:

"If January calends be summerly gay
"I will be winterly weather till the calends of
May,"

or more succinctly:

"March in Janiveer January in March I fear."

A Blanket of Snow

No; cold and snow in January are seasonable, suitable, and healthy, the infant year still needs lulling, not stimulating, and it is "Janiveer-freeze-the-pot-upon-the-fire" that we desire and expect. But if we want the cold for a lullaby, we want the snow for a blanket; many a plant will live unharmed through a winter of snow that must perish miserably if there is just a black frost and nothing between it and that.

Some interesting experiments have been made in the Tyrol to show the value of the snow. Thermometers registering the minimum temperatures were buried at different altitudes and left for the winter, and the varying depths of snow at those places were noted. It was found that where the snow lay very deep the mini-

mum temperature of the earth was in every case several degrees higher than where the snow lay only thinly, and plantlife had a better chance of preservation there.

One curious relationship between the fall of the leaf and snow is not generally realised. Only in climates where frost and snow habitually occur do the trees shed their leaves: those trees growing in warmer, snowless lands retain them. Thus Pliny speaks of the evergreen planes of Greece. Were a chestnut tree, for instance, to keep on its broad leaves throughout the winter the weight of the snow upon it after a storm would be utterly destructive. Our evergreens have all either needle-like leaves, as the pine, or specially resistant leathery leaves, as the holly and laurel.

Vanguard of the Flowers

When we see the honeysuckle leaves putting out—why should the honeysuckle be invariably the first to appear in the bare hedgerows?—we know that "February-fill-dyke" is at hand. Snow we shall still have—winter is not yet over—but Nature's awakening is beginning, she is putting on a chequered garb;

"February fill the dyke Either with the black or white (i.e rain or snow) If it be white it's the better to like."

And the flowers are coming, just one or two of the vanguard, tentatively, braving the cold. And of these:

"The Snowdrop is the herald of the flowers.
Sent with its small white flag of truce to plead
For its beleaguer'd brethren,—suppliantly
It prays stern Winter to withdraw his troop
Of winds and blustering storms, and having
won

A smile of promise from its pitying foe, Returns to tell the issue of its errand To the expectant host." —WESTWOOD.

An old English rhyming calendar fixes the traditional date of the snowdrop appearing:

"The snowdrop in purest white array First rears her head on Candlemass day,"

Candlemas being February 2nd, a mystic date round which has centred much old weather lore. Thus, the Scotch say:

"If Candlemass day be dry and fair The half o' winter's to come and mair— If Candlemass day be wet and foul The half o' winter's game at Yule." But one must remember that all references to dates in tradition and folk lore are really to dates twelve days later in the year, for when our calendar was corrected in 1751, eleven days were dropped out, so that, for instance, February 1st became February 12th. The elision of these days makes many an old allusion seem not very apposite, thus, Chaucer's description of May Day is obviously better suited to the middle than the beginning of that month. But the "Fair Maid of February"-the snowdrop-is not unduly credited with appearing at the beginning of the month, in fact it has been known to greet the middle days of a mild January. Essentially English as it seems to-day, it is difficult to realise that it is, after all, a foreigner and that its true home is in Central and Southern Europe, and from thence was brought to our country in the Middle Ages by the monks, who made frequent journeys to and from Rome, and who, greatly prizing it as the emblem of the Purification, dedicated it to the Virgin and planted it by their homes.

The Snowdrop and the Crocus

As the snowdrops stand massed together in wood and garden one would never think that a complete snowdrop plant consisted only of one solitary flower and a pair of leaves above ground, with a little brown bulb and a few rootlets below. Every single flower, therefore, represents a complete plant, and when we gather a snowdrop we are gathering the whole concentrated floral effort of that plant. Needless to say, the plant does not risk its future upon its seeds alone, but throws off tiny bulbs from the main bulb, and these, during a season, grow to the measure of their parent, and the patch of ground where the snowdrops grow may become fuller of bulbs than a Christmas pudding of plums, and one can scarcely get even a garden fork between them.

But close on the heels of the snowdrop is the gay crocus:

"The Crocus hastens to the shrine Of Primrose lone on St. Valentine,"

continues the old rhyming calendar. Now the crocus is not a true Britisher any more than the snowdrop is, though the purple spring and autumn crocuses are now considered naturalised. Our chief friend is

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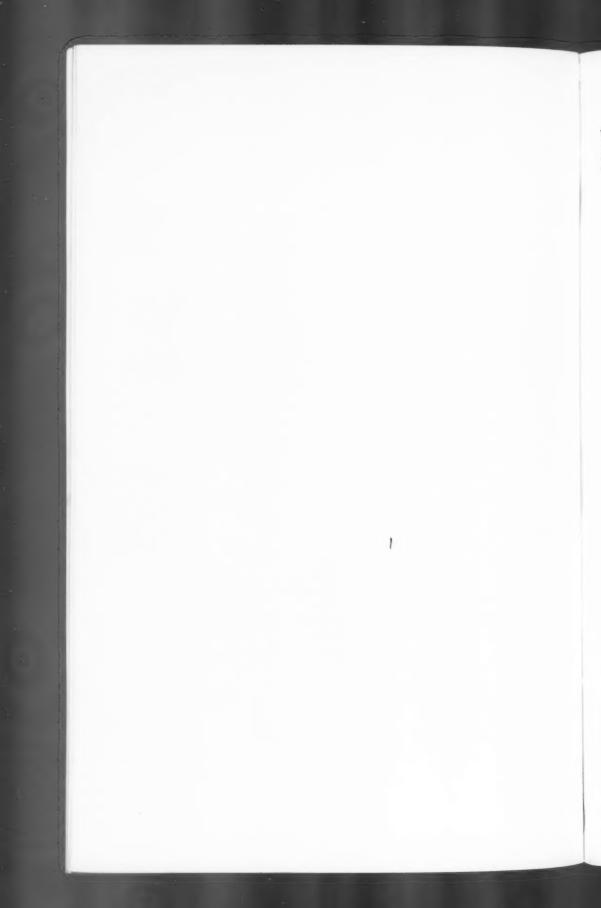
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"When on a sunny bank the primrose flower Peeped forth, to give an earnest of the Spring."—Wordsworth.



the vellow crocus, commonly called the Dutch crocus; its native home, however, is unknown, so warmly has it been made one with the countries of its adoption. "The yellow crocus is a perfect flower, leaving nothing that we could wish to add to or to alter," says one writer, and, indeed, a carpet of this crocus amid the spring grass, such a carpet as is shown in the picture, is one of the most beautiful sights in Nature, so gloriously does the gold of those shining cups flame in the sunlight, so gorgeous is their massed brilliance on the green grass background. No wonder that Tennyson spread it before the three goddesses, rivals for Paris' favour-" At their feet the crocus brake like fire," he says. It is rather curious how the sparrows attack this flower and destroy it-or is it that they are such devoted lovers that they do it to death with their attentions? The common yellow garden crocus misses the point of its attractiveness, however, for apparently it never sets seed, and has to be propagated by the formation of bulbs, though the spring and autumn purple crocuses both set good seed.

The Primrose Bank

The primrose is another sure mark of earliest spring that Nature sets in her Calendar. It lacks the flaming glory of the crocus, but its pallid gold makes a wonderful appeal to sentiment, and so the poets have generally adopted it as the representative of spring. It is just such a scene of beauty as that in our picture that strikes their imagination—the leafless branches above, the flushed stream below, and high on the bank the primrose clumps like myriad stars bravely gleaming in the teeth of the keen March wind.

"First came the primrose
On the bank high.
Like a maiden looking forth
From the window of a tower,
When the battle rolls below,
So looked she
And saw the storms go by."
—Sidney Dobell.

The tint of the primrose is peculiar to itself, and so the plant's name is used to denote a certain unique shade of what we call yellow in spite of the fact that Spenser and other old writers always called it green. But those who just look at the primrose

with an "impressionist's" eye do not realise that there are two kinds of primrose flowers making up the mass, pin-eyed flowers and thrum-eyed flowers, each root bearing either one or the other, never both.

The pin-eyed flowers have a knob like a pin's head in the centre; the thrum-eyed have five yellowish stamen heads clustered round the middle. The stamens in the pin-eyed flowers are half-way down the tube of the corolla and out of sight, and so, too, is the receptive knob in the thrum-eyed flowers. Nature's plan is for the two kinds of flowers to unite one with another, the high knob to receive the pollen from the long stamens, the low knob from the low stamens, and this is brought about through the agency of visiting insects.

When the Buds Swell

While the primrose is beginning to peep on hedge-banks and in the woods, subtle changes are going on overhead. The trees are still bare, with no hint of leaf; at a distance they are as they were in the "dead of the year," but look closely at a twig, and it is obvious that the buds, so small in those days, are swelling: they appear just as though one were looking at them through a magnifying glass—the same form, the same colour, but larger. By St. David's Day-March 1st-this is quite appreciable. Also, though there is no suggestion at present of leaves, vet several of the trees are beginning to follow the example of the hazel in producing their flowers, and the elms are in the forefront of the movement. Now, an elm carries two kinds of buds on its bare twigs. narrow pointed leaf-buds at the end and rounded flower ones lower down, and as " March-many-weathers " comes roaring in like a lion these round flower-buds open and break up into little reddish nodules, which nodules gradually change into reddish-brown rosettes that are really tufts of tiny flowers. Often there are so many of them that the bare branches of the whole tree seem to glow rosily to the observant looker-on. Unlike the majority of our English trees, the flowers of the elm are perfect, containing both stamens with the fertilising pollen and the ovules to be fertilised. Very quickly does the elm act; the wind hustles out the powdery pollen, fertilisation is effected, fruits form, and

suddenly, in a good season, the elm is clothed with a garment of green, and folks cry that "the elm is bursting into leaf." But the green garment is composed, not of leaves, but of myriads of fruit, each set in a circular wing and gaily green. As the days go by the greenness dies down, and just as the pointed buds are really allowing leaves to emerge in dainty, fan-like pleats the withered-looking fruits are swept off the branches, "littering up" the whole neighbourhood. But we have progressed far beyond "March-many-weathers," for this is in May days.

The Dawning Spring

Back to the very threshold of the spring and the cold biting days of early March we go, and peeping into the thick green coats of the yews, we see there, too, flowersflowers of two kinds. On one yew we may find on the backs of the twigs vellow globes of stamens out of which the pollen flies in a golden cloud if the branch be struck; on another tree are tiny objects the size of a pin head, the female flowers waiting for the fertilising touch of the pollen dust. But for beauty in the later March days we turn to the larch and the goat willow. In the winter no tree more ugly, more dead-looking than the larch, but no tree more vivid, more beautiful in its greeting to the spring, for the dry dead buds quicken all together, and out of some there come needle-like leaves, soft, flattened, and of the purest, loveliest greea; out of others, pale vellow objects like miniature cauliflowers, not much bigger than a pea; and out of yet others most entrancing soft rose-red cones, " very beautiful and delectable, being of an excellent fine crimson colour, which, standing among the green leaves, allure the eye of the beholder to regard them with the more desire," as an old writer said. Indeed, the day "when rosy plumelets tuft the larch " is one of the red-letter days of Nature's Calendar.

The palm willow is another Naturegiven joy of March. Early in the month the dull leathery bud-scales open and disclose silvery silken-covered balls within. The twigs studded with the balls might be wands of magic. But the silver passes into yellow—as moonlight gives place to sualight—for gradually out through the silvery hairs gold-headed stamens push and stand up like golden pins on a silver cushion.

"O come into the hollow, for Eastertide is here, And pale below the hill-side the budding palms appear.

And silver buds a-blowing, Their yellow blooms are showing, To woo the bee."

-MARGARET DELAND.

It is the male tree alone of this willow that is the "palm," the female only carries grey-green catkins that miss the radiant beauty of the other sex, but have the grace of persistence and their day of charm too, when, two or three months later, they transform into masses of silvery, feathery down, that carries off their tiny light seeds upon the wings of the wind.

But the flower of the actual arrival of spring is admittedly the daffodil, "The love star of the un-beloved March," as it has been called, for everyone knows, with our greatest poet, that

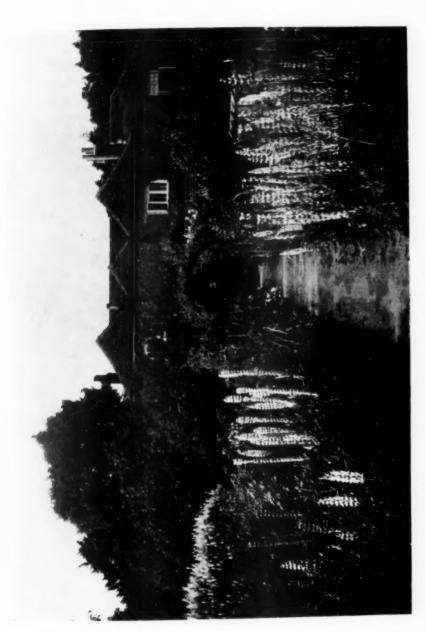
"When daffodils begin to peer
With heigh! the doxy over the dale,
Why then comes in the sweet of the year,
For the red blood reigns in the winter's pale."

With the advent of the daffodil, and also that of "Our lady's smock at Our Lady's tide "—the cuckoo flower at Lady Day we leave March going out like a lamb and pass right into the glad season of spring.

"The year hath changed his mantle cold Of wind, of rain, of bitter air, And he goes clad in cloth of gold Of laughing suns and seasons fair,"

April!

April! And it is "Oh, to be in England, now that April's there! " The flowers are coming, not singly, but in battalions: the violets, "April's loveliest coronet"; the wood anemones carpeting the spinneys with their delicately poised white blossoms; the blackthorn throwing a thin bridal veil over the hedges, while in the marsh the butterbur the bog-horn-is sending up thick flesh-coloured spikes of arresting appearance. Overhead the hornbeam is dripping with gold and green catkins, larger male, smaller female, both on the same branch; the poplars, greater specialists and separating the sexes on different trees, are dangling red or furry, or furry-plus-reddish, tails, according as



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"A quiet summer space Of garden flowers and toiling bees,"-T. Buchana Read.

be they are black, aspen, or white poplars. The coal-black buds of the ash, so primly set in pairs down the twigs, are beginning -some of them-to open and allow tiny. magenta, wart-like excrescences to appear which evolve into flowers of a sort and of a diversity; some with stamens only, some with seed cases only, and some with both together. Quaint objects are the flowers of the ash-just dark-looking tufts that are set off by the black buds of the leaves—those laggards of buds that will not, until much later, produce their contents. Side by side with the ash the silver birch. "The Lady of the Wood," is greeting the spring, and, as is natural, her greeting is more graceful and cordial. All her buds are acting together, none are standing coldly aloof, and her tender green leaves unpleat at the same time that the delicate female flowers are raising their thin columns erect on the branches, and the hard and hitherto resting male catkins are lengthening and drooping.

But April brings a joy other than the flowers. In the second week in April there come, flying straight from tropical Africa, the nightingales—just the male birds—which settle, each in its own selected spot, in wood or by lane-side. The ensuing week the hen birds follow, and they, too, disperse over the land. The cock is singing his heart out—

"The merry nightingale
That crowds and hurries and precipitates
With fast thick warble his delicious notes,
As he were fearful that an April night
Would be too short for him to utter forth
His love chaunt and disburden his full soul
Of all its music,"

and his pre-destined mate hears the alluring notes and joins him. Thus do the birds pair, and apparently none are left to bemoan a solitary existence. In April, too, "the cuckoo shows his bill," says the old rhyme, and country lore asserts that April 21st is the exact date of his appearing. It has been said that mid-April is the peerless time of the year, full of charm in itself, full of promise of an ever-increasing beauty in the future, and with nothing to regret behind it, for no season of desire has yet passed by.

Flush of Green o'er the Land

And now on every hand the leaves are beginning to come and a flush of green runs over the land, but there is no uniformity in the method of their appearing; each acts after its own fashion, but always in the same fashion. The beech leaflets, translucent, green, and fringed with silver hairs, open from fan-like pleats as they pour out of the buds; the poplar leaf, rolled up in two coils, unrolls itself, disclosing its face, and so, too, does the violet, which has chosen a similar manner of rolling up; but the primrose, coiled backwards into two prim rolls which lie lengthwise by the midrib, expands its face without the feedingrolls being seen. unless, indeed, one turns the leaf over. So by May days the hedgesides are green, and the trees are mostly getting clothed. But the oak is as vet only peeping out warily, putting forth the tiniest bronze-coloured suggestion of leaves; while the ash is holding back altogether. Quite the sluggard among trees, it has learned by experience that even in May bitter cold and frost may come.

It is an extraordinary and unexplained thing that somewhere about mid-May there is almost always an icy spell; in fact, the 12th, 13th and 14th of May are called the Eismänner (Icemen) by the Germans, though these dates are not always the precise days when the biting north wind for a moment gains sway again, often doing irremediable damage, but never harm to the cautious ash.

The Month of the Poets

May is the month of the poets, the month when Nature's garden is at its zenith of beauty. The country-side is a riot of blossom-a vehement appeal to the senses. Three times a year does a sudden glow of colour flood favoured portions of the land with beauty-the golden glow of the gorse when it flames forth at the summit of its beauty on a common, the tender blue of the hyacinth when it throws a magician's carpet under the woodlands, and the glowing crimson of the heather when it tinges the mountainside. And of these three colour glows, two are in May. Most favoured is the month!

Gorse, of course, flowers mildly all the year round; do we not know that "when gorse is out of flower kissing is out of fashion"? and our picture of the primtoses in bleak March shows a touch of gorse gold in the background, but it is only in early May that the real day of the plant comes, when all the buds act in concert and present their butterfly flowers, when their strong sweet scent pours out in unison and the prickly shrubs are alive with the musical humming of bees. A gorse common is then a place of intoxication and of exhilaration—one is drunk with scent and colour.

Gorse-Hyacinth-Hawthorn

But the glow of the hyacinth is altogether different; its appeal is quite other than that of the gorse. The gentler hue of this "Sapphire Queen of the mid-May," its less voluptuous scent, which old Gerard unromantically described 300 years ago as "a strong sweet smell, somewhat stuffing the head," causes it to lack the intoxicating quality of the gorse, and both colour and scent, felt through the subdued atmosphere of the spring woods, evoke tender sentiment, the gentler side of the emotions, rather than the passion and exaltation of the gorse.

Yet other red-letter days mark Nature's Calendar for May, and chief among them are those mid-May days when the hawthorn's myriad stars crown the long hedgerows as with a diadem—days of emotion,

"The coming of the Hawthorn brings on Earth Heaven.

All the Spring speaks out in one sweet word, And Heaven grows gladder, knowing that Earth has heard." —SWINBURNE.

Rarely, indeed, does any hawthorn grace May Day itself, popular belief not-withstanding, though that belief is rooted in centuries of tradition and has a basis of actual fact. Quite true is it that in Chaucer's time the whole Court "both most and lest" went a-maying on that morning, and "Hawthorne brought both page and grome," but his May Day was on May 12, as already explained, and hence the very moment for such pretty revelling.

The Cowslip: Key-flower

But perhaps nothing marks May so much as the flowery meadows, gay as any garden, where, amid a host of blossoms, certain flowers outstand with special

significance to indicate the progress of the seasons. There is first the cowslip, which the Scandinavians call the "Key of May." and tell a charming story of how children in the spring are lured to the palace of the goddess Hulda, and, possessing the magic flower, unlock the door with it and find treasure of gold and jewels within. Of this they may take, but they must carefully lock the door again when they leave, or nevermore will they find the palace in the spring. It is all an allegory, of course. for Hulda is goddess of Nature, the cowslip the key-flower of the spring, and Nature only admits to her secrets those who value and guard them. The coming of the cowslip is worth watching. In April or earlier it is laying on the ground a little green mat of leaves like the primrose's, but shorter, rounder, which leaves are coiled similarly on the back in the buds, but as they uncoil they spread themselves flat on the ground in a rosette. From the centre runs a long stalk, holding aloft at first many green crinkled bags. They open, and yellow petals push out and, as they do so, the flower droops its head; each petal is touched with red:

"These be rubles, fairy favours;"
In these freekles lie their savours."
—SHAKESPEARE,

which reminds us that the flowers are reputed matchless for the complexion, and in ointment or distillation add "beauty exceedingly." Note that there are pin-eyed and thrum-eved flowers here just as there are in its relative the primrose. Then, secondly, and hailed as "First pledge of blithesome May" by the American poet, Lowell, there is the homely dandelion, loving the dusty wayside as well as the meadows - which the more exclusive cowslip never does. But thirdly, and chiefly, in those meadows there are the buttercups and daisies, which stand for the root idea of flowers in our childhood's days, Now everyone knows that spring has not really come until you can cover six daisies at once with your foot. (Of course, no one must omit to put his foot on the first daisy that he sees, or the daisies will cover him or a great friend of his during the year, says the old superstition.) Indeed, the daisies almost seem to make the spring to many a town dweller, for no flower,

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" Where the pool Stands mantled o'er with green."—James Tuonson

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except its companioning buttercup, is more friendly or more willing to creep up to the very edge of the townside. We remember how Geoffrey Chaucer used to rise from his bed in the May mornings just "to see this flower against the sumé spread," "so great affection" had he to it, since he tells us "that blissful sight softeneth all my sorrow"; and we recall, too, his pretty picture of that party of knights and dames who, seeing a tuft of daisies on a flowery lea, made homage and "due obeisance to the daisy paid," and the flutes played and a lady sang a virelay:

"And still at every close she would repeat
The burthen of the song; 'The daisy is so
sweet.'"

Not only are buttercups and daisies lavish in their first appearance, their generosity is long lived and right on through the summer and into the autumn they continue, the daisy more especially.

Nature in Lavish Mood

But the flowers of May are endless, Nature is in her most lavish mood. No wonder Spenser wrote of May as

"the fairest mayd a ground Deckt all with dainties of her season pryde, And throwing floures out of her lap around."

Whatever the nature of the season of that particular year, May never fails of flowers, as the old rhyme says:

> "Be it weal or be it woe, Beans blow before May doth go."

Flowers are splendid calendar markers, it is wonderful how little they vary in their coming, though, of course, a specially severe weather rebuff may a little check their ardour. And so May goes out to the passionate song of the nightingale, to the haunting note of the cuckoo, who "is singing all day." Spring has finished her work.

Summer has Come

Now, if May is the month of the meadows and hedgerows, June is the month of the trees and of gardens. All the unpleatings, unrollings, and uncrumplings of the leaves are over and, in their varied outlines, they spread upon the branches and clothe the bareness. The

charming mosaics they there lay are in the fullness of their beauty, the sun has not yet scorched, the insects have not yet ravaged. Yet, though all the world finds words of admiration for foliage in bulk. rare, indeed, is it for the detail to be appreciated—the pairing of the leaves, or their arrangement in spirals long and short, and the many ways in which they scheme that each individual leaf shall get its due meed of the sunlight as far as may be possible. Thus the horse-chestnut places its mosaic quartets of leaves across the end of an upright branch so that we are reminded of a sunshade, but the same mosaic at the end of a horizontal branch lies in a line with the branch and in the same plane, while on branches at various inclinations to the vertical the leaf mosaics will be at corresponding angles; always the leaf surface faces the direction from whence the greatest amount of light comes. So, too, in the sycamore; the vertical shoots at the top of the tree carry their leaves in pairs up their stems, each pair at right angles to the pair above and below it; they are never brought up to one level as they are in the horse-chestnut. But on the horizontal branches a definite mosaic is formed, for the leaves all lie in one plane with the branch, their stems even crossing one another in the attempt to fit in every available space with a leaf and leave no gaps. The large, softtextured lime leaves, which at their first appearance hang like so many hearts from the boughs, raise themselves to face the The walnut and the ash, laggards SIIII. both, have at length produced their leaves, both, curiously enough, having compound leaves made up of several pairs of leaflets and one terminal one. In this leafy month of June it is well to take a closer glance at the ash leaf; it will repay it, for it is an elaborate structure with a complete system of drainage. Its stout mid-rib is really a conduit-pipe for rain water, almost roofed over between the leaflets, but open just where they join the mid-rib to allow their contribution on a rainy day to pour into it. It is lined, moreover, by tiny hair-like structures whose special business is the absorption of water. Now, since the leaves of an ash always hang tilting outwards and downwards, all the rain that falls upon them is conducted

into this central channel and runs over the water-absorbing hairs, the surplus finally dripping off the tip of the terminal leaflet to the ground beneath.

The Month of the Grasses

Again. June is the month of the grasses, a vast clan making no special claim to beauty and the members of which are so like one to another that to the majority of folk they are indistinguishable, but playing so large a part in our economy that they must needs be recognised in recording the characteristics of the passing seasons. All May they were growing apace. in June their dusty heads are nodding mature, and they fall under the mower in the hav harvest with a fragrance peculiarly their own, and in their passing the gaiety of the meadows passes too, for there fall with them those many brilliant flowers that were one of the beauties of May.

Though May must be counted the hour of Nature's garden, June, with July, is undoubtedly that of Man's garden. Now it is that, whether it be of castle or cottage, he can most intimately associate himself with it, dwell in it and rejoice over it. For with a garden knowledge and association spell joy.

"A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool,
Ferned grot—
The veriest school
Of peace."

—T. E. Brown,

It is true most of the flowering shrubs are over-the lilacs, the flowering currant, the berberis, even the azaleas are just passed-but there are still the syringas with waxy flowers and strongest, sweetest scent: the rhododendrons, princes among shrubs; the brilliant brooms, the pale spiked veronicas, and the gorgeous, fragile cistuses. And chiefly, and above all, there are the roses. And there we have the apotheosis of beauty in Nature-and June is King of the year because June is the month of the roses, whether red, white, or yellow, rambler or shrub, whether the rarest product of the garden or the chance offspring of the hedgeside. "What can the world produce equal to the June Rose?" asks Richard Jefferies. "The common briar, the commonest of all, offers a flower which, whether in itself, on

the moment of its appearance at the juncture of all sweet summer things, or its history and associations, is not to be approached by anything a millionaire could produce. . . . A June Rose . . . it is a gift, not a discovery or anything earned—a gift like love and happiness."

The Herbaceous Border

But the garden has other beauties in these midsummer days; in the wide herbaceous border the lupin and delphinium spires are rising, the great poppies flame, the foxgloves offer sleeping places to the insect tramps, the sweet peas poise as for flight, cunningly steadying themselves by curving tendril fingers; the pinks scent the air and mark the borders—and mark the seasons too, for, as our new Poet Laureate says:

"Their dazz'ing snows forth-bursting soon Will lade the idle breath of June: And waken thro' the fragrant night To steal the pale moonlight.

The nightingale at end of May Lingers each year for their display: Till when he sees their blossoms blown, He knows the spring is flown.

June's birth they greet, and when their blocm Dislustres, withering on his tomb, The summer hath a shortening day, And steps slow to decay."
—ROBERT BRIPGES.

Over arches and up walls the honeysuckle and wistaria clamber; the clematis, too, adds its own quota of beauty, particularly if it be the noble Jackmanii. He alone who loves a garden can tell the joy thereof.

Yet he who only wanders in the garden by day only knows part of its charm; the garden by night has a hidden life of its own that begins as the dusk falls, and is a life of many events. True, the roses disappear in the shadows, and the rich hues of the herbaceous border are covered by the curtain of night, but the evening primrose is jerkily unclasping the five sepal hooks at the tip of its buds and its gleaming pale yellow blossoms are opening out before our very eyes even in the space of a minute the bud becomes a flower-and the tobacco plant lifts its shabbily-dull hanging petals and forms brilliant white starry blooms. The little daisies on the

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" When June the roses round her calls."
W. E. HENLEY.

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NATURE'S CALENDAR

lawn are, however, going to sleep, closing their white petals over their yellow centres, though the big marguerites in the borders are gazing stonily unchanged while their brother, the yellow anthemis, is drooping its yellow rays to form a fringe. The Nemesias, gayest and most fashionable of garden residents, whose blossoms by day are rigidly held up in a certain haughty splendour, hang dejected and pinched, like a society beauty that has suddenly got old.

But the spikes of flower on the big veronica bush seem in greater evidence than by day in their pale mauves, and the deep-cream honeysuckle blossoms are certainly more brilliant and are pouring out a perfect stream of delicious fragrance. So penetrating is the odour that the hawkmoths from far afield can scent it (a moth that had settled 300 yards away has been known to make straight for the plant directly the evening stream of fragrance began), and as they sip the honey in one after another of those deep vases of the flowers, they carry the fertilising pollen from blossom to blossom. Other scents, other pale flowers, become a presence in the night that they never were by day, the night-flowering stock, for instance, though, on the contrary, there are as many or more inhabitants of the garden that wrap themselves up to sleep-the leaflets on the acacia boughs over one's head, the leaflets of the clover at one's feet, the water lilies on the surface of the pond. And so the hours of dark pass till the dawn. But when man walks abroad once more in his garden the sun is high, and all is as when he left it as dusk fell the evening before. and he knows nothing of the happenings in his garden by night.

Warm Touches

Outside the garden, Nature still goes on marking the time. The orchids, which entered on the stage of the seasons in May, have passed in a choice and vivid procession—the early purple, the green-winged, the pyramid, the butterfly, the bee, the twayblade and others. By July it is over save for a few stragglers. Ragged robin and its near relative, the red campion, are giving warm touches to the meadows, for, as our old English calendar continues:

"When S. Barnabie bright smiles night and daie Poor Ragged Robin blooms in the haye. The Scarlet Lychnis, the garden's pride, Flames at S. John the Baptist's tide."

"S. Barnabie" being June 11th, and St. John the Baptist's tide, of course, June 24th—Midsummer Eve. On the eve of St. John, June 23rd, the superstitious may sally out to look for the St. John's wort and weave garlands of good luck with it, or, on the following night, collect the mystic "fern seed" that supposedly will render them invisible!

St. Swithin

July 15th—St. Swithin's Day—is another of those meteorological dates which stud our calendar; in this case the tradition that if it rain on that particular day it will rain on the forty succeeding days is a mis-statement wholly without foundation, and is, probably, a primeval pagan belief which has been foisted most unjustly upon Swithin, the good Bishop of Winchester. More interesting is the fact that about this date two of our most notable weeds come to the fore—the poppies and the thistles.

The poppies flare up at us, they cannot be ignored, yet "a barren race they are, the proud poppies, lords of the July field. taking no deep root but raising up a brilliant blazon of scarlet heraldry out of nothing. They are useless, they are bitter, they are allied to sleep, and poison and everlasting night; yet they are forgiven because they are not commonplace "(R. Jefferies). Beetles and flies, as well as bees, visit them largely, though there is no honey within those most attractive scarlet cups, but they feed on the pollen in the purple stamens and are satisfied. Do they find soothing properties there, one wonders? The top of the green urn—the seed-case -forms a most delightful platform for their alighting.

The thistles are poles apart from the poppies; they make no stirring appeal to the eye, they are pure utilitarians, and they are strikingly successful. A dozen different kinds are found up and down the country, and some of them seem almost ubiquitous, for at every point the thistle is equipped for the battle of life; it is armed with prickles and spines to keep off its enemies, it has a constitution of the toughest, it is satisfied with the barest subsistence, its blossoms are a

model of co-operation, and its progeny are world-wide aerial voyagers. A thistle head is a colony of innumerable flowers, all small, long, and very thin, massed for effect, and each with a bountiful supply of honey. Unattractive, perhaps, to usthough really the Melancholy and the Spear thistles are quite beautiful—they are attractive enough to insects, for over eighty different kinds have been found visiting them, and these, creeping from floret to floret, cross-fertilise them. Then the blooms wither and are transformed into thistledown; every floret produces a seed with a crown of silver hairs, and in the hot August sunshine the merest breeze gives them a lift, and they float away, each to take its chance of finding a niche for itself and founding a colony.

Peppermint and Forget-me-not

Down by the stream-side a special little flora is responding to the hot summer sunshine and calls for notice. The lifacblue masses of peppermint run by the very edge of the water and reveal themselves by their strong odour to any stranger who bruises their leaves. All the mints are aromatic, but this is the richest in that quality, and so Lord Byron, in his famous passage on the breath of flowers, speaks of the water mint as one of the three plants which, being trodden upon, perfume the air most delightfully, burnet and wild thyme being the other two. "Therefore you are to set whole alleys of them to have the pleasure when you walk or tread," he urges.

The forget-me-nots mingle their skyblueness with the lilac of the peppermint; and the minulus, or monkey flower, adds a touch of vivid yellow and is so much at home there that one is apt to forget that it is an American and a comparative stranger, less than a century imported. Above the fragrant white plumes of the meadow-sweet-Queen of the Meadows are waving, tallest and finest where they fringe the brook. Once they were highly estcemed for a "strewing herb," "The leaves and flowers excell all other strowing herbes for to deck up houses, to straw in chambers, halls and banqueting-houses in the summer time, for the smell thereof

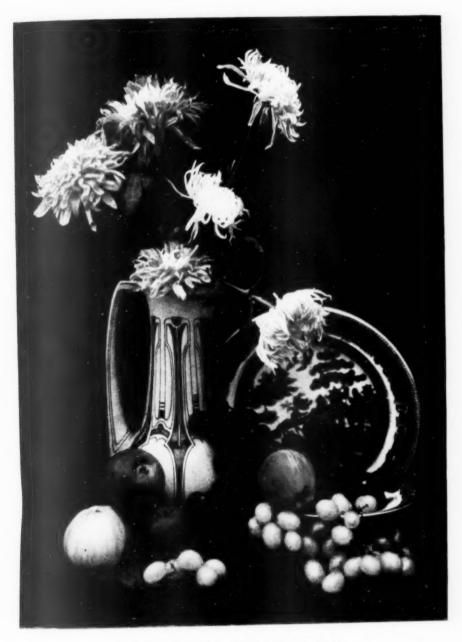
maketh the heart merrie, delighting the senses," says an Elizabethan writer.

Farther on, for the flowers keep in the open sunshine, the stream's own trees, the willows and alders, mark the time; the willows have just finished sending forth on aerial flight their tiny seeds crowned with white hairs, the alders are not yet quite ready to launch their young ones on the stream. It is mostly in autumn days that these, equipped with air bladders and oil coat, hustle from the little dark cones and start on their swim to a new home.

Passing Summer

Summer is passing, and its best is over when the dog-days end—its zenith is during their continuance, July 3rd to August 11th—though summer heat has no real connection with the "Little Dog star," as the Romans thought, and after which they named the hottest days of the year.

The traveller's joy is festooning the tops of the dusty hedges, the toad-flax makes gay their bose with its lemon and orange hues, but there is little fresh growth now, few new flowers come. Still the knapweeds, particularly the greater one, are perhaps not quite in their prime yet, the golden rod is only just beginning to raise its tall yellow spikes in the hedgerows as a signal of approaching autumn, while the heather is but starting to tint the hills with purple and spread the third great colour glow of the year. There is no intoxicating scent with the heather, no stirring of violent emotions, but it evokes, in a degree which the gorse and the hyacinth never do, a passionate attachment, a love of the land, a sense of home to those who have dwelt by it, which they never lose. Three kinds of plants cover those vast tracts of pink moors -the ling. commonly called "heather," with tall spikes of the timiest upward tilted pink or white flowers; the bell heath, with spikes of larger, showier, drooping red-purple flowers; and the cross-leaved heath, which carries a cluster of a few beautiful hanging shell-pink flowers on the top of its stalks. Of these three, the ling is always the dominant. Notice the wise provision against drought that their tough, evergreen leaves make; small though they



" Mellow Autumn charged with bounteous fruit."
— Workesworth

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are, their sides roll backwards so that the edges almost meet behind. Thus the back of the leaf is protected from giving off much water, while the tunnel tends to retain what moisture there is. This structure is most marked in the common ling and least in the cross-leaved heath. Both wild and hive bees love the heaths of all kinds, and on a bright autumn day a moor will be alive with their humming as they gather the lavishly-provided honey.

The Waning of the Flowers

As August goes out, the day of the flowers wanes more and more. In the gardens the sunflowers, dahlias and asters, even the chrysanthemums, are but coarse and poor substitutes for roses, lilies, and sweet peas of earlier days, but the day of the fruit is coming with its charm of the fulfilment of promise. The flying seeds are beginning to chase through the air; some on parachutes, as the dandelions, the thistles, the hawkweeds and, prince among parachutists, John-go-to-bed-at-noon (Tragopogon pratense), with a parachute like a fairy's sunshade; some fly with wings -the sycamore's twin fruits, the ashkeys, each with rather a clumsy one, the birch with the tiniest, most fragile pair; some by means of a sail—as the hanging fruit of the lime or the tucked-in fruit of the hornbeam. The corn has ripened and is falling to the reaper—summary and symbol of all man's debt to mother earth; the hops hang in clusters; red and gold apples bear down the boughs; the elderberry's slender twigs are bent under the great bunches of purple berries. hedge-sides are once more gay with scarlet hips and crimson haw, while

"The Mountain Ash
No eye can overlook when 'mid a grove
Of yet unfaded trees she lifts her head,
Deck'd with autumnal berries that outshine
Spring's richest blossoms."—WORDSWORTH.

Autumn Preparations

All through September the trees are very busy with preparations for their winter rest. A "great emigration" goes on within them, for, from the leaves, which during the summer have been the manufactories for tissue building, every particle of value is being withdrawn and stored in the permanence of trunk or branches. All that is valueless is left behind, so that it

will be conveniently got rid of when the doomed leaves fall. At the base of each leaf a neat layer of separation is forming; presently this will give before the buffeting of the wind, as the perforated layer between postage stamps yields to pressure. The green colouring matter-the chlorophyll-that made the leaves so vivid in the spring, so refreshing in the summer, breaks up; a substance of chameleon properties is produced, which is red when there is acid in the sap, blue when there is none, and violet when there is a little; yellow granules, hitherto overshadowed by the green, come to the fore, and so we have the lovely tints of autumn leavesthe reds, orange, yellows, purples. Never in their brightest season, never in their full luxuriance of maturity are the trees as brilliant, as gay and as gorgeous as in this their season of decay. Some leaves take on a particularly brilliant colouring; the barberry becomes scarlet, and so does the maple; the dogwood is crimson, the oak a golden yellow. The swan song of the year is indeed a song of beauty:

"The beech is dipped in wine; the shower Is burnished; on the swinging flower The latest bee doth sit.

The low Sun stares through dust of gold, And o'er the darkening heath and wold The large ghost moth doth flit."

—ALEX. SMITH.

But one cannot pass over Michaelmas Day, September 20th, without remembering the flowers that are always associated with that season:

"The Michaelmas Dasies among dede weeds, Bloom for S. Michael's valorous deeds, And seem the last of the floures that stood Till the feste of S. Simon and S. Jude, Save Musbrooms and the Fungus race That grow till All-Hallowtide takes place."

("Feste of S. Simon and S. Jude" being October 28th; "All-Hallowtide" being November 1st.)

The Season of Decay

This little mark set by the fungi in Nature's Calendar is indeed quaint and quite by itself, and speaks eloquently, as nothing else could, of the passing of the year. For fungi are inherently a product of the autumn, of the season of decay; only from decaying matter can they draw their sustenance. With the loss of green colouring matter they have lost the very

power to fend for themselves from the elements of Nature, as the green-leaved flowering plants can, and do. They have fallen back on the ladder of evolutionthey are degenerates in the great scheme of Nature—though many of them possess still a certain measure of attractiveness. The flesh-coloured mushroom with its pink gills is one such: the puff-ball another: while the scarlet fly agaric, which frequents the moist earth of the beech woods, is a particularly brilliant third. But thing of beauty though this last-named gorgeous "toadstool" is, its colour is a dangersignal of poisonous juice within, so poisonous that it is specifically used to compass the destruction of those hordes of persecuting flies that haunt late summer days.

With October that which was raised out of the earth in the spring of the year returns to the land from whence it came. The nuts come rattling down: hazel, walnut, horse-chestnut, sweet chestnutthud, thud, they fall; the leaves, less direct in their methods, flirt a little with the wind as they descend, but the goal is alike for all. Is it not the "Fall of the Year," the close of the cycle of life? Yet as the branches are stripped of their leaves and settle into bareness, it becomes apparent that their future clothing is nevertheless assured, for at the base of every leaf stands a tiny bud, well wrapped, well caulked, well equipped to face winter with impunity. All the late summer it was growing in the axil between leaf-stalk and branch. The plane, however, hits upon an ingenious plan of developing its bud in a cave at the base of each leaf-stalk, so that, unsuspected, it grows, and only suddenly is revealed when its covering hut is torn from it as the leaf falls.

"St. Luke's Little Summer"

The days are getting chilly and "drawing in"; a touch of frost comes in the air. But often, midway through October, somewhere about St. Luke's Day, October 18th, there comes a burst of warm sunshine, a flash of summer as it were, and we know it as "St. Luke's Little Summer." It balances in some sort those "Icemen" that chill the end of May. In the pine woods "St. Luke's Little Summer" is

responsible for some little stir. On the trees three generations of cones can be seen hanging—the tiny ones formed in the spring: older, sealed-up cones that were born the spring of the previous year: and old cones with gaping scales out of which the winged seeds have flown. It is to the year-and-a-half-old cones-the as yet sealed cones-that this burst of sunshine has a message. They are ready, waiting for the call. Warming under the sun they hang, then one afternoon the summons is imperative; their scales burst apart; on each is lying, side by side, a pair of pine seeds, every seed being equipped with a large delicate brown wing. For a little they lie thus, basking in their first introduction to air and light, then the breeze comesonly on breezy days do the scales snap apart-and the seeds are hustled off their beds and rushed into the open, and twirling and falling, spinning and whirling, they fly past like little brown moths, lucky if one in a host finds a good nook for settlement and subsequent growth. So "St, Luke's Little Summer" in the pine woods is a moment of ecstasy-the warm sunshine around to bring back memories of summer: a cold nip in the air, and, maybe, a wood gatherer with her bundle to foretell the coming of winter; the sighing, scented branches above, the dry carpet of pine needles below, and the whirling seedmoths bridging the two.

November Days

Little now remains to be done in November days; rain, mist and frost complete the stripping of the branches. An oak may cling tenaciously to a few leathern-looking shrivelled leaves, the brambles still hold some of their crimson leaflets, but what little sign of plant-life there is—outside the evergreens—is merely a few adventurous individuals; it is a case, indeed, as Hood punningly wrote, of

"No shade, no shine, no butterflies, no bees, No fruits, no flowers, no leaves, no buds, November."

The year's effort is over. For good or evil, Nature's seasons have run their course, and "earth, brought to judgment for its fruits, says, 'I have done what I could, now let me rest."



"When meek Autumn stains the woods with gold, And sheds his golden sunshine."—W, C, BRYANT.

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CORRODING GOLD

By ANNIE S. SWAN

SYNOPSIS OF OPENING CHAPTERS

To the middle-class family of the Rodneys comes the strange, exciting intelligence of a windfall in the shape of an enormous legacy left by an almost unknown Australian relative to Mrs. Rodney. Evidently the event is to make all the difference in the world to the family fortunes, and precisely how it will affect each the story proceeds to disclose. Estelle Rodney, the Board School teacher, will gladly escape the monotony of the Camberwell infants, Kathleen, the private secretary to Mrs. Dyner, is less certain to move, though it will make a difference to her friendship with John Glide, Cyrus Rodney, the head of the household, is perhaps the most unaffected, and it is doubtful if he will relish the shift from his little shop in the City Road.

CHAPTER IV

THE LAWYERS AND AUNT AGNES

JOHN GLIDE was unfeignedly glad to get out of the house and to put some considerable distance between himself and the place where he had been plainly shown that he was no longer welcome.

Waiting for a motor-bus at the end of the lane, he suddenly beheld Kathleen—the person whom of all others he least wished to see at the moment—coming in a slanting direction from the other side of the street. She was carrying a bag which seemed too heavy for her. He sprang forward to relieve her of it, at the same time realising that never had she looked more winning and desirable. She wore her simple clothing with an air, and the face under the smart little hat was a dream.

"Why, John, is it you? Wherever have you sprung from? Have you been at The Laurels?"

"I have just left it. I am waiting for a bus."

"And why didn't you stop to supper? I suppose you have some other engagement. I'm a bit late. There was such a large and brilliant party at Mrs. Dyner's this afternoon! Such a crowd of splendid, interesting people! That is the life, John! I should like to live it always. But what makes you look so horridly glum?" she asked, suddenly struck by the gloom on his face.

"Nothing. I'll walk with you to the gate, if I may."

"Oh, you may," she said with a provoking emphasis and a rather coquettish smile; "but if you have the hump to that extent, you needn't. Have they all come home?" "All but Cyril."

"He isn't due until to-morrow," she answered, and, having been relieved of her bag, she gave her veil a tug and straightened her hat.

"Well, I needn't go any farther," said Glide, depositing the bag inside the porch. "Good-night and good-bye, Miss Kathie."

"Gracious, John! Whatever has happened? Will the body of a respectably dressed man be found to-morrow on the line near Loughborough Junction? You are not usually so melodramatic."

"Am I that? I was not aware of it, and I don't know why I should be. I don't feel anything but a little depression. When you get inside and hear the news you'll probably think I had no cause."

He raised his hat and walked away, and Kathie dismissed him airily from her thoughts. He was of so little account in her life that she had forgotten him by the time she had entered into the agitated atmosphere of the family circle.

The discussion of the astonishing event of the afternoon was still going on in the drawing-room, and a very few moments sufficed to put Kathleen in full possession of the facts. "Gracious! how exciting!" she cried, tossing off her gloves and her coat, and, in so doing, revealing her pretty afternoon frock. "A fortune really come to us! I can't believe it!"

She looked from one to another, and the varying expressions on the different faces struck her oddly. Her mother's was still flushed and bore a sort of glorified, uplifted look, while her father seemed frankly worried. Estelle was very thoughtful and was certainly not elated. Jack and Louie were holding a brief, mysterious conversation in the far corner of the room.

Kathleen laughed hysterically,

"A fortune," she repeated. "Why, none of you look much excited over it, and, as for John Glide, he was a positive bear! I've never seen him look as he did just now. I've just parted from him at the door."

"He must have been waiting about for you, Kathie," said her mother severely. "It is quite a quarter of an hour since he left

the house."

"Oh, no, he wasn't! He took pains to inform me—very politely, of course—that he was waiting for a bus. What happened to put John's back up, and why wasn't he

invited to stay to supper?"

"He was invited, I think; but he had sufficient good sense to decline the invitation," said Mrs. Rodney with her newly acquired and somewhat exaggerated air of dignity. "I think we had better go to the dining-room and eat something, if that creature has placed it on the table."

"It is all on, mother," said Estelle cheerfully. "I have just made the salad."

"I'm feeling peckish now," broke in Kathie. "Come to think of it, I don't believe I had any tea this afternoon. What

a crowd! It was glorious!"

"If it was at all like what it was on the day I was there, there would not be enough food to go round," said Mrs. Rodney, grown suddenly critical in her view of the character of Mrs. Dyner's entertainments, over which she had formerly been silent and lost in admiration. "I never saw such a set-out! Call it refreshments! The whole thing could have been put there for half a crown!"

"Oh, mother, you don't understand! Mrs. Dyner's guests are not guzzlers like the chapel people, who will go any distance for a free feed," said Kathleen scathingly, for she could not bear to have the smallest

aspersion or even reflection cast upon her idol. "Can I be allowed to sit down with my hat on, seeing that everybody seems to be ready? A fortune!" she continued, reverting to the astounding news she had heard. Why, mother, if it is true it will open up a wonderful vista."

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"There can be no doubt about its truth," her mother replied. "But at any rate to-morrow your father and I go down to Bloomsbury to the lawyers' office, where we will hear every detail and have everything settled beyond dispute. By to-morrow evening at this time we shall know much more about it. I hope I comported myself with dignity in that interview to-day, but of course it was rather overwhelming to be confronted with such a stupendous announcement without even a moment's warning and with the working-party going on in the drawing-roem."

"Oh, my! Were all the tabbies there?" cried Kathleen. "And did you tell them? I should have loved to have seen their

faces beyond everything!"

"I dropped a judicious hint," said Mrs. Rodney, with a reserve that was quite new to her; and Estelle smiled broadly at her words and manner. "But we must behave with reticence and discretion until we are perfectly sure of everything. Meanwhile let us go and consume our nondescript meal. Very soon I hope we shall be able to sit down as a family to a proper late dinner, beautifully cooked and exquisitely served. It has been the dream of my life!"

"Tommy-rot!" muttered Jack irreverently from the background, still smarting under a sense of the inhospitable treatment that had been meted out to his idol.

It is necessary for the young, untrained heart and mind to set something on a pedestal and worship it. Kathleen has thus glorified her employer, who had undoubtedly shown her considerable kindness, while Jack had set up good old John Glide as a fit object to receive the homage of his boyish heart. Louie worshipped Jack, and they had many happy hours together, the little girl being always willing to fetch and carry most docilely for him, and quite pleased if he gave her but a nod or a smile or addressed to her the words "good kid" in a certain tone of voice.

The evening meal of the Rodneys consisted of cold beef and salad with some fried potatoes, and a rhubarb tart, with the addition of a milk pudding for Mr. Rodney,

who could not digest the pastry beloved of the younger members of the family.

"Mother, I don't see you eating anything," said Mr. Rodney solicitously, watching his wife sitting with her hands folded on her week-old table napkin, and with her face wearing a far-off, detached ex-

pression.

"Eat!" She seemed to come back with a start to mundane things, and she gave a small, unreal kind of laugh. "It is very difficult to eat-but yes-I will take a slice of meat and a little of Estelle's salad. You generally make it very good, my dear."

She ate a few morsels with a relish which she vainly tried to conceal, and then began

to talk again.

"Of course," she said, addressing Estelle, "both you and Kathie will give up your posts. But perhaps it would be ample time

to do so next week."

"Oh, I can't leave them in the lurch like that, mother," said Estelle quickly, "and it is very early days to talk about giving up anything. We must be very much surer first of how we really stand."

"I shall never leave dear Mrs. Dyner, I'm sure," said Kathleen stoutly. surprised and excited she will be when I tell her of it all! And what a help! You see she is in the swim of everything. We shall never go wrong if we take her advice."

"When in doubt consult Mrs. Dyner," murmured Jack; but Kathleen withered him

with a glance.

"It is time you were sent to a proper public school, or to a tutor who would keep you in order, sir," she said severely.

They got through the meal somehow, but certainly none of them at the end of it could have told what they had been eating.

When the girls rose to go upstairs Cyrus Rodney crept away to his own chair in the corner of the morning-room to smoke his after-dinner pipe and to try to digest all that had been told him of this wonderful

happening.

He was not sure that he really felt quite so glad as he ought to have done. It was an obvious fact that the whole tenor of their lives would be altered, and he did not exactly know where and what his place would be in the new scheme of things. As he observed the change which the mere prospect of coming into the money had wrought on his wife, his imagination

quailed at the prospect of the transformation that she might achieve, if further investigation and inquiry should prove that the fortune was a substantial reality.

Next morning the Rodneys all departed their several ways at the usual time-all except the master of the house, who had to accompany his wife to Bloomsbury instead of making his customary journey into

He had wanted to rise early and go down to business first, but she would not

permit him.

"Nothing of the sort, Cyrus. I know precisely what would happen if you went. That dingy old hole of a shop would swallow you up, and I should see no more of you till night."

"That is not a very respectful way to speak of the business that has supported us so long, mother," he ventured to re-

monstrate mildly.

"I'm not throwing any slur on it. I'm simply pointing out what usually occurs

when you go there."

"And John Glide won't be able to understand why I don't come," said Mr. Rodney, ignoring his wife's remarks. "I assured him last night that he might expect to see me this morning as usual."

"John Glide's feelings are of very small account. I suppose he is able to open the shop of a morning, though I should not be at all surprised to hear that you took down the shutters yourself while my lord sauntered in somewhere about ten o'clock."

"Oh, come, mother!" her husband expostulated, "you are unjust to John. He is there on the stroke of eight-thirty every

morning."

"And so he ought!" snapped Mrs. Rodnev. "Well, is there anything to worry about? You can go from Bloomsbury to City Road without coming home, if you like. But it is absolutely necessary that you go there with me first thing this morning. I shall be ready in about twenty

Travelling by bus and train - though Mrs. Rodney's secret ambition rather inclined her to hire a cab in order to mark the importance of the occasion-they reached the office of the lawyers about ten o'clock, and were received by both partners with the utmost deference and cordiality.

Mrs. Rodney being the legatee, it was necessary for her to take the principal part in the interview, which she did with great gusto, her self-importance and self-confidence visibly increasing as it proceeded.

Both these men of business, thoroughly versed in the idiosyncrasies of human nature and skilled in handling them, were infinitely amused, while they felt a sort of mild compassion for the gentle, rather

deprecating husband.

This was not an occasion on which Cyrus Rodney would shine. A quiet hour with a congenial friend and a well-loved theme for discussion, and he revealed himself at his best. But in that somewhat sordid atmosphere, which seemed to bring into prominence the very hardest side of his wife's nature, he was obviously ill at ease. The number and rapidity and aptness of her questions simply took his breath away. He concluded that she must have lain awake all night thinking over what she would say and actually wording the questions in her own mind, considering the celerity with which she had fired them off in such quick succession.

"What I would like to know is how soon this money is payable," said Mrs. Rodney, after having learned the whereabouts of the sheep-farm by means of a map of New

South Wales.

"Well, madam, it practically is payable now. We have received instructions to advance whatever money is necessary on production of the proofs of your identity. We must get the birth certificate and go through some other small forms. But since we have been down to Ridgeway Barn to make inquiries regarding Mr. Sheldon's parentage, we found the proofs of your identity convincing enough."

"Did they know all about me down at the Barn?" asked Mrs. Rodney in a somewhat awe-stricken voice. "I should have thought they would have forgotten all

about us-wouldn't you, Cyrus?"

"Hardly, mother. Your family was an old one in the district."

"Well, then, so you can begin paying at once?" she said to the lawyers, returning to business.

"Yes, madam. You can have a cheque

to-day, if you like."

"I am sure there need be no hurry about that," put in Mr. Rodney nervously, for this haste to lay hold on gold seemed to him a trifle indecent.

"We have never been very well off, though our circumstances have been comfortable," said Mrs. Rodney, explaining Cyrus as if he had been a large, irresponsible child. "My husband has worked very hard all his life, and it will make me very happy to see that he does not work any more. He has an excellent knowledge of his business, but I believe that he has allowed people to cheat him right through. He would not press anyone for payment of a bill, even though he was hard up himself and the bill was one which the customer was quite able to pay."

The partners smiled and nodded kindly towards Mr. Rodney, taking in the situation

at a glance.

"You've observed the condition attached to the holding of the sheep-farm, I suppose, Mrs. Rodney? Have you a son to whom that sort of life would appeal?"

"I have two sons. The elder one is in business, and I rather think he would not care for Colonial life. He is a Londoner, and all his tastes and sympathies and interests are centred in the City. But there is our sixteen-year-old Jack. It would be the very thing for him, wouldn't it, Cyrus? He spends all his spare time reading about cowboys and that sort of thing. It would simply be ideal for him!"

"There are no cowboys in New South Wales," smiled Mr. Underwood. "But it would undoubtedly be a splendid thing for him. Mr. Sheldon particularly wished his name to remain attached to his sheep-farm. It has been 'Sheldon's' all the time he

has had it."

"Well, Jack's full name happens to be John Sheldon Rodney, so that there would be no difficulty about dropping the surname, if that should be necessary."

"There is a very capable manager on the farm-a Scotsman, named Macfarlane -who is in charge just now, so that if you agree to send your son out he will find himself in good hands. And, if you will pardon me for saying so, he will learn the business all the more quickly because he is quite young and is fond of an outdoor life. Mr. Sheldon left the manager a handsome legacy because he had been such a friend to him. I think it is Macfarlane's idea to come home and settle in Scotland after he has got the affairs of the sheep-farm wound up. All his people are there, occupying good positions."

"Why, how very nice! Everything seems to be arranged so comfortably! I shall require your advice about investments,



" Everything will be different, Agnes, and you will have us to consider " -p. 179.

O. E. Bruck.

gentlemen," she said graciously. "I am afraid I shall have to leave myself rather completely in your hands. Perhaps you could tell me, however, the minimum income I may depend on without actually touching capital? My husband "—here she smiled benignly on him—"has always said that it is the sign of an ill-balanced mind to trade on broken capital."

"Mr. Rodney is certainly right, and if more people acted on that principle—well, then, a considerable part of our business would be gone. The income? Well, roughly speaking, you may count on anything from five to seven thousand pounds a

vear."

"A year! Cyrus, do you hear? Five to seven thousand a year!" she repeated in an awe-stricken voice. "So it will not be necessary for you to do another stroke of

work after to-day!"

Cyrus did not look so elated over the prospect of immediate withdrawal from business as, under the circumstances, he might have been expected, and perhaps as he ought, to have done.

After they had gone the two partners looked at each other and gently smiled.

"There will be a bit of a comedy before this affair is played out, Walter," said the older man.

"You're right—and maybe a bit of tragedy too. The grey mare's the better horse in this case evidently, and I am rather sorry for that old man."

"Ah, but he has grit at the back. I shouldn't be at all surprised if he were to put on the brake just at the critical and unexpected moment. She's a madam, anyway, and will cause the dollars to fly. We are likely to have a lively time in the next few months, watching the gradual evolution of Mrs. Rodney."

"Let us hope she has got a sensible family, or, at any rate, somebody with sufficient influence or hold over her to keep her from making ducks and drakes of the

property."

"We must do our best for her ourselves. And, meantime, it's a nice little windfall for us, coming just at the moment when

we needed it badly."

Once outside, Mrs. Rodney proceeded to talk breathlessly, in consequence of which they took the wrong turning, and had to wander back through a labyrinth of mean streets.

"Why don't you look where you are

going, Cyrus? You ought to know the City, if anybody does," she said pettishly. "Where are you going?"

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"I suppose I must take my way now to City Road. It is getting on for noon," answered Rodney, with a slight air of weariness.

"Well, I shall go and see your sister Agnes," she said. "Do we part here?"

They had reached the busy thoroughfare of Holborn, where the traffic at that hour seemed to Mrs. Rodney to be in inextricable confusion.

"We can. Will you take a motor-bus, my dear? I think I'll come with you and see Agnes," he added on second thoughts; and a minute or two later they were seated on the garden seat of a motor-bus bound for Chelsea.

"I suppose we shall have to make some provision for Aunt Agnes," said Mrs. Rodney, her busy brain in a ferment. "She will have to leave that horrid little shop. I don't think it would be wise, however, to have her to live with us, though the children are all so ridiculously fond of her. She wouldn't fit in anywhere that I can see. But a little cottage in the country, a good servant, and a little pony chaise, perhaps! Then we could run down and see her occasionally."

Rodney looked distinctly startled.

"I can't imagine Agnes away from Chelsea, mother, any more than I can imagine

myself out of City Road."

"That is because you have no imagination. But that's what's going to happenvery soon, too. You could make a present of the business in City Road to John Glide. Then we should feel that we could be done with him."

"Done with him!" echoed Rodney. "But why should we be done with John, mother? He is an excellent fellow. He has been

quite like a son to me."

"Precisely. And I have ne doubt that he would like very much to become a son in reality! Of course he admires Kathleen. The girls will have to look higher nownot that John would ever have been good enough for Kathleen. With her looks and the chances she has had at Mrs. Dyner's, it is not likely that she would ever have taken up with the like of him. Now, of course, she might get a title. Why, everything is possible—just everything! How Kathleen will enjoy telling Mrs. Dyner to day! I am dying to hear what she will

say about it. At first I don't doubt we shall be glad of a little advice from Mrs. Dyner. As Kathleen says, she knows everybody"

Rodney sat still, listening, his mind becoming gradually bewildered and chaotic.

But presently his thoughts began to wander, for the pageant of the streets, aided by his imagination, began to enthral him as usual. Few people, his wife least of all, knew anything of Cyrus Rodney's inner life. She would thoroughly have disapproved of his day-dreams, and she might even have reminded him that, had he indulged less in them, they might all have been better off as a family.

Arrived at Victoria, they alighted from the bus and turned their faces towards the river, taking short cuts through little narrow streets, which must have confused anybody but those familiar with them.

In these by-streets of old Chelsea are to be found artists who are not well off, lovers of books and of curios and of out-of-the-way things, and to these the little double-fronted shop with the quaint round windows and with the name "A. Rodney, Dealer," painted above the door, was a well-known, even beloved, resort.

Mrs. Rodney's face expressed extreme distaste as they approached the shop. Always her secret soul had rebelled against trade in any form, and Agnes Rodney's particular trade she considered hardly respectable. The word "Dealer," for instance, suggested nothing to her but pawnbroking and traffic in second-hand clothes!

Rodney pushed open the door, a faintly tinkling bell announced their entrance, and presently his sister appeared.

She was a small, bird-like person, extraordinarily neat and delicate in appearance, old-fashioned, of course, judged from the standpoint of her sister-in-law, but her sunshiny face was a singularly pleasant one, and her smile was very sweet as she recognised and greeted her relatives.

"Cyrus and Louisa both together at twelve o'clock in the day! Why, whatever has happened?" she asked excitedly.

"Let us come in out of sight and hearing, Agnes, and you shall be told," said Mrs. Rodney loftily.

Agnes immediately held open the little green door with the muslin curtain across its lower panes, and admitted them to the back sitting-room, where she spent practically the whole of her life. There were living-rooms upstairs, but these she used only for sleeping purposes, two of them being sublet to a couple of women artists who "did" for themselves and who accounted themselves extraordinarily lucky in having found such suitable quarters.

There were curios in the sitting-room, too, beginning with a gentleman in a suit of full armour in the corner, and including little pictures—some of them gems—on the walls, odd bits of bronze and old pewter, and a wonderful old pierced brass fender in front of the fireplace, where glowed a cheerful morning fire.

A savoury odour pervaded the apartment, and in a little casserole in the oven Aunt Agnes's midday meal was simmering gently and disturbing nobody.

"Why, whatever has happened?" repeated Miss Agnes as she whisked imaginary dust from the old Chippendale chairs and pulled them forward for her visitors.

In a few breathless words Mrs. Rodney put her sister-in-law in full possession of the fact. Agnes listened, round-eyed, full of wonder, slightly overwhelmed by the great news and by the number of schemes that Mrs. Rodney already seemed to have formulated in her mind.

"And of course you'll leave this horrid little hole, Agnes?" she said grandly. "I was saying to Cyrus on the bus that a little cottage in the country, on the river, perhaps, but—"

"I haven't come into a fortune, and I hope never to have to leave my own little home here as long as I live."

"Everything will be different, Agnes, and you will have us to consider," said Mrs. Rodney in her most uplifted voice. "The prospects of the girls will have to be considered, and everything will matter. It will either be the little cottage, or—or a complete gulf fixed, Agnes—just as it will be with the City Road business."

Agnes Rodney's smile faded a little, but the bright determination in her eyes suffered no daunting.

Mrs. Rodney was a very powerful and overmastering person. There was no power on earth, however, capable of shifting Agnes Rodney from her little home and the environment she loved.

Cyrus noted and fully understood the expression on his sister's face, and, somehow, a sense of immense relief crept into

his soul. Amid the clash of social worlds this little citadel would remain unshaken!

Something assured him that he would need it for his soul's refuge in days to come.

CHAPTER V

CHANGES ALL ROUND

HE change that swept over the Rodney household in the next day or two was indescribable. Conceive of it! The whole

"I was thinking before I got up," Mrs. Rodney had remarked, "that a note had better be sent round to Carrie Bygrave. Why didn't somebody think of it before?"

"But she will be here, anyway, to tea as usual, won't she?" Kathleen had said. stopping in the act of buttering her toast to look inquiringly at her mother.

"That's just it, my dear. She will be here, and perhaps in the circumstances it might be better if she did not come today,"

Carrie Bygrave was engaged to Cyril Rodney, and since the engagement had been sanctioned by both families the custom was that she should spend Saturday afternoon and evening-when the Rodneys were at home to their friends-at The Laurels. The greater part of Sunday Cyril passed at the



" Kathleen not only got the boots, but insisted on helping him to put them on.'

conditions and outlook upon life were changed in the twinkling of an eye for these seven persons, and, consequently, for others deeply interested in their affairs.

Mrs. Rodney lived in a state of ferment. She could neither eat nor sleep properly.

It was now Saturday, and the next turning point was the arrival that afternoon of the eldest son, Cyril, from his weekly journey into the provinces for the sale of blouses and skirts, which was his "line."

At breakfast that morning there had been a somewhat heated discussion.

house of the Bygraves in the time-honoured way of the engaged man.

Carrie Bygrave was a very charming girl. She was engaged in business in the West End, being first hand in the showroom of a Bond Street milliner-a position for which she was excellently qualified. The size of her salary and her undoubted "air" had reconciled Mrs. Rodney in some measure to the engagement. Like most mothers, she had an exaggerated idea of the matrimonial value of her son, and she accordingly patronised Carrie in the good old way.

Carrie was a very jolly little person, fond of fun and pleasure. She was genuinely fond, too, of Cyril Rodney, and, because her salary was nearly double his, she always insisted, in a perfectly good-humoured way, on paying her full share of the cost of any entertainments or outings which they enjoyed together. Moreover, she gave her lover handsome presents, and up till now Cyril had been very pleased with his lot, though sometimes he was visited by a few secret pangs as he thought of the future, when they should be compelled to live on his salary.

That prospect did not appear to trouble Carrie very much, however, and she was anxious to be married soon. But Cyril, like many modern young men, was in no haste to give up any of his bachelor comforts to support a wife. Life was a very good thing to him just then, being full of variety and gilded by the boundless hope of youth.

He was a very mediocre person indeed. He persistently talked, however, in the grandiloquent style of the day when he should become one of the heads of "our firm"

Carrie was not in the least deceived with regard to his nature and merits. Clever and sharp as a needle herself, she was perfectly aware of his limitations. Perhaps, woman-like, she loved him all the more for them. They were a very happy couple, though maybe the best of the affection was on Carrie's side.

The Rodney girls all liked her; and she was very kind to them in the matter of advising them about their clothes, never disdaining to give an hour or two on Saturday afternoons to re-trim their hats or even making fresh ones for them.

Kathleen owed the very becoming and decidedly French-looking headgear, which so often incensed Anna Helder, her employer's niece, entirely to her prospective sister-in-law, and the cost was microscopical.

"But these are things we do not give away outside the family circle."

Although it was Kathleen who spoke, it was Estelle who waited with the keener anxiety for her mother's answer.

"What difference could it make to Carrie, mother?" she continued. "She'll have to know, and, after all, she's properly engaged to Cyril."

Mrs. Rodney nodded mysteriously.

"That's just it-she's engaged now, but

nobody knows what will happen. Everything will depend on the point of view frem which Cyril looks at it. I am so glad that neither of you girls has an entanglement. If you had, it would complicate everything in the future."

The girls exchanged glances, and both of them coloured and laughed consciously.

Their father, apparently busy with his bacon, kept his eyes on his plate.

"Oughtn't Jack to be down, mother?" he said presently with a mild glance at the clock.

Jack was allowed an hour's licence on Saturday morning; so the question was really quite superfluous and was meant merely to create a diversion.

"It isn't his time yet. Besides, they're playing Surrey at Guildford this afternoon," put in Kathleen quickly.

Mrs. Rodney ate a few morsels in a wholly abstracted way, as if such a sublunary thing as food were a matter of no consequence.

"If we have a French chef, perhaps we shall not be allowed any bacon of a morning," she said, suddenly hurling one of her secret projects at her astonished family. "I've heard that in France they've only coffee and rolls for breakfast. Certainly that would be more refined."

"Oh, mother," cried Estelle, sitting back and rocking with laughter, "if we are going to be in that kind of bondage we'll need to split company, I'm afraid! Where would poor dad be without his rasher? Have another, dear—there are two left."

Rodney passed in his plate.

"No chef, Freach or otherwise, can bring forward anything to excel a good tasher of a morning," he said firmly. "Get my boots, Kathie. If I am greedy, somebody has got to pay!"

Kathleen not only got the boots, but insisted on helping him to put them on. It was a pretty family picture.

At last, when they had got their father out to catch his bus, his wife sat back in her chair with a resigned sigh.

"Your father will give up that horrible City Road business only when he is made to. To be such a wise, good man, he has a singular lack of the sense of fitness."

"But, mother," said Estelle in a puzzled voice, "you couldn't expect him just to drop out as if it had never existed. Think of the years he has spent there and how we were all born above the shop! Why, I"

—she paused as she observed her mother wince at the word—"I shall never feel quite the same," she resumed, "to any other house. Will you, Kathleen?"

"I've never liked the City Road, Este, so I won't commit myself," answered Kathleen guardedly. "Well, I, too, must be off. You're well off, Este, to have two holidays in each week!"

"We don't think!" answered Estelle, with a slight smile.

Everybody knew that Saturday was her busiest day. She was a very accomplished baker of cakes, and her Saturday mornings were given up to that in preparation for the afternoon and evening. Other household duties filled up every moment until four o'clock, when her mother, dressed in her best, would seat herself in the drawing-room to receive.

Mrs. Rodney got a great deal of genuine pleasure out of these weekly receptions, and, on the whole, made an excellent, if somewhat garrulous and patronising, hostess.

"I shall feel very odd this afternoon, Estelle," she said as she followed her elder daughter into the kitchen to begin the programme for the day.

The maid-of-all-work was clearing the dining-room table, so that they were practically alone in the back regions of the house.

Estelle, with a big blue overall covering her skirt and blouse, looked the picture of housewifely charm. Mrs. Rodney was so used to her appearance that she did not observe the charm. She did remark, however, that she thought Estelle was getting stouter.

"It's surprising how the figure sets after five-and-twenty," she remarked as she put the buttons in at the back of the overall. "What will you make to-day? Oh, the usual sandwich cake, I suppose. That goes farthest and is very satisfying. But oh, I forgot, it won't matter now! Here, Estelle, let's 'chuck it all,' as Jack would say, and go down West and have lunch at one of the fashionable restaurants and buy cakes at Buszard's!"

But Estelle had no mind to forgo the homely pleasures of the baking-board, which every genuinely womanly and housewifely woman thoroughly enjoys.

"No, no, mother. We should simply make ourselves dead tired for the afternoon. Sit down, while I look out what is in the store-closet. You didn't really mean what you said about Carrie, did you? It can't possibly make any difference to Cyril that you have got all that money. Why, they've been engaged for over two years!"

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Mrs. Rodney sat down in a chair at the end of the kitchen table, and, before she could speak, her argus eye caught sight of two pieces of good toast, which Julia had put among the débris of the plates as she carried them through to the scullery. But she restrained herself from finding fault sharply, as she would undoubtedly have done forty-eight hours before, and so Julia was permitted to perpetrate unchecked what Mrs. Rodney in her secret heart regarded as a crime.

"Thank goodness, we'll get rid of that girl! She would exhaust the patience of a saint," she murmured as Julia set down the tray with a clatter on the pantry table. "What were you speaking about, Este?—oh, yes, about Cyril. Well, dear, what has happened is, of course, bound to make a difference. Cyril will be a rich man. He is very good-looking, and he is now entitled to look higher than a milliner, however well she happens to be paid."

Estelle's face hardened.

"If Cyril were to throw Carrie over, mother," she said indignantly, "he would behave like an abominable cad. She's a perfect dear! He would never get such another, nor would he deserve to."

"Dear me, Estelle, you're quite in a rage! After all, it is Cyril's business—not ours. He is twenty-four—surely of an age to make up his own mind whom he really wants to marry. To think he doesn't know yet!—but, there, perhaps he does. I sent him a line to the Midland Hotel on the off-chance of its finding him there."

Estelle, with her shapely arms plunged in the soft flour, had quite a musing expression on her face. It was Cyril she was thinking of for the moment, pondering on the effect sudden riches were likely to have

on him.

A shrewd judge and student of human nature, she felt a little afraid that they would affect him for the worse; for Cyril was vain and rather ill-balanced, though he had improved greatly since his association with Carrie Bygrave. Before his engagement he had belonged to the card- and billiard-playing set, and Estelle had sometimes feared that he was developing a fondness for spirits, imagining, as he did, that

to take the friendly glass as often as it was offered made a man of him.

But Carrie had stopped all that—not rudely or flagrantly, but quietly and simply—through the force of her womanly charm and her strong sense of right.

Estelle was genuinely fond of Carrie Bygrave. In fact, she was her most intimate woman-friend, and, had she been asked for a frank opinion, would have had no hesitation in saying that Carrie was much too good for Cyril.

"You must send a line to the Board tonight, Estelle, so that they may get it on Monday morning. We must start house-

hunting at once.'

"Oh, but, mother," protested Estelle, "I can't do that; I shall have to remain at school until they get somebody to fill my place. I really would like to wait till the end of term now. It is only about four

weeks.

"You simply can't do that," her mother answered quickly. "If you were ill, they would be obliged to get somebody at once. And this is of far more importance. I seem to miss something in you all," she said with a gentle sigh. "One would think none of you were glad about this money. Even your father will hardly talk about it."

"Give us time, mother, to get used to it," said Estelle good-humouredly; "and remember that we have all taken root—some of us rather deeply. Kathie, for instance—nothing will drive her away from dear Mrs.

Dyner."

"She must give up working for her, but she can remain friendly. I dare say we shall find Mrs. Dyner useful. There were several titled people there on the day that I went to her 'At Home.' She introduced me to Lady Hatherley, and I had quite a long talk with her. She gave me her card and asked me to call on her; but I have never done so. Unfortunately, I have lost the card, I'm afraid. How foolish it is of anybody to miss opportunities like that! My reason for not calling on her really was that, when I thought things over, I concluded that we couldn't ask Lady Hatherley to come here."

"Why not, mother? If she wanted to make a friend of you, what was to prevent her from coming here? We've a very good

home."

Mrs. Rodney assumed the expression of the woman misunderstood by her family, and said she had better go and see whether the lazy children were thinking of getting up.

She found them having a pillow fight on the landing between the rooms, and for the next ten minutes there was no time to think

or talk about the fortune.

Soon after midday dinner Estelle dressed herself and went out, telling her mother that she would be back before anybody was likely to arrive, and that she would bring some fresh flowers. At two Louie departed for her weekly dancing lesson, and Mrs. Rodney was left in sole possession.

She was getting into her afternoon frock when she heard the ring of the bell and the sound of Cyril's voice in the hall below. Immediately she ran out to the landing, hair-brush in hand, and called him to come up, which he did two steps at a time.

"Hallo, mater, how are you? Yes, I got your letter! Great Scott, isn't it tremendous? Where are they all? I quite expected to get home to a sort of family war-council,

don't you know."

"Everybody's as usual, and going about their business as if nothing on earth had happened, dear," she answered as she kissed him fondly and drew him into her bedroom.

Although six feet in height, Cyril was nothing but a boy in her eyes, and he was undoubtedly her favourite among all her children. He was very like her, but the weakness of the mouth and the chin was accentuated in his face, and his reddish hair, closely cropped in the prevailing fashion, showed how his head narrowed above the brow.

"You got my letter, then?" she asked, drawing her dressing-jacket about her shoulders and sitting down on the edge of a chair while Cyril leaned against the

dressing-table.

"Only just. Great news, isn't it? You didn't mention the sum? Is it worth while, mater? Will it make a difference to us?"

he questioned excitedly.

"It's a huge fortune, Cyril—anything from one to two hundred thousand pounds! The lawyers say that we shall have an income of seven or eight thousand a year without touching capital."

"Great Scott!" repeated Cyril, tugging

"Great Scott!" repeated Cyril, tugging at his small moustache. "I can't take it in! What are they all saying about it? Aren't

they half-crazy?"

"No. They go on simply as if nothing had happened. I'm so glad you have come home, dear. Perhaps you'll wake them up a bit. Father is at the City Road as usual, and Kathleen at Mrs. Dyner's. Estelle told me this morning that she would certainly stop at Romsey Road till the end of the term."

Cyril whistled and nodded his head.

"They don't seem to grasp it. Why, it'll alter everything. We'll get out of this beastly little house, shan't we; and pater will leave the shop? I suppose something can be done for me—I can be bought a decent partnership or something?"

"Why, of course. We must have a proper talk over it to-night after the people have left. I suppose the usual crowd will turn up to-day; but, somehow, Cyril, already I feel that I can't take the same interest in them. Some of them at least it won't be possible for us to go on knowing."

"I suppose not," said Cyril soberly.
"Does Carrie know about it, mater?"

"Not yet. We haven't seen her, but she'll be here, of course, some time this afternoon. Now I must get on with my dressing, as it is half-past three."

Cyril withdrew, and at the bottom of the stairs he encountered his father, who had just come in.

"How are you, my boy? Glad to see you back. Had a successful week?" asked Rodney in the same kind, interested tone that his children had always been taught to

He betrayed not the smallest sign of perturbation or excitement.

"Pretty fair. But I say, dad, this is tremendous news about Uncle Edgar's fortune. Aren't you fearfully backed about it?"

Rodney smiled rather ruefully, and suggested that they should go into the little morning room for a smoke. Already the other two rooms were in course of preparation for the "At Home" day, Julia even then being engaged in setting out the cups and saucers on the dining-room table.

"I hardly know, Cyril. I suppose we don't realise it yet; but it is disturbing your mother a good deal. She has not had a good night's rest, I believe, since she heard the news."

"And I don't wonder," put in Cyril, as he drew out his cigarette case. "It's a big lot of money that has come to her! Why, it'll alter everything. We shan't be the same people. Of course, we'll leave Denmark Hill and go in for a different kind of life altogether. West End style, don't you know

-a carriage and heaps of servants. What a lark!"

There was no elation in Rodney's looks as he took out his old briar pipe and proceeded to fill it.

"It is not easy to accommodate oneself to such drastic changes at my time of life, Cyril. But your mother has them in contemplation. Tell me, do you think it will be necessary for me to give up business?"

"I should think you'd be jolly glad to get out of it now, dad. The City Road's the limit. Besides, it isn't worth toiling and moiling at. It would have died a natural death sooner or later, at any rate—probably sooner. The returns have been going steadily down. Nobody but you would have hung on to it so long."

"I was talking to John to-day. He seems to think it has life in it yet, Cyril, and that, if some new features were introduced, things would improve."

"Chuck it over to him, then, and let him try," said Cyril ruthlessly. "It's a dead cert, you wouldn't get a red cent for the goodwill. Hallo, who's that?—somebody being shown in."

Julia, straightening her cap, announced Eugene Woods. He was unaware of the change in the fortunes of the Rodneys, and he had come early, very full of the improvements in his own position and prospects, and eager to have a further talk over these with Estelle.

He was, as has been said, a frequent visitor at The Laurels, both on Saturdays and Sundays, and in a general way he was a favourite, though Cyril affected to despise him, and said he had a bee in his bonnet.

He looked a very different type from Cyril Rodney as he stood close by him in the little room. Cyril was the picture of the man of the well-developed body, which had little mind or soul behind it, while it was evident at a glance that Eugene had developed his intellectual life at the expense of his body. In his eager pursuit of knowledge he had neglected either to feed or to exercise it properly.

Cyril nodded him a careless "good afternoon," but Rodney himself bade him kindly welcome and offered him a smoke.

On pretext of washing away the dust of his journey, Cyril took himself off upstairs, meeting his mother, now fully dressed, on the landing as he ascended.

"It's Frenchie," he said slightingly, that being the family nickname for Woods in

CORRODING GOLD

the house. "Looks more moonstruck than ever. Oh, he's all right with the pater. Say, I don't think I'll come down yet. I'll pop round and see Carrie, and bring her on later."

Mrs. Rodney leaned for a moment against the balustrade, eyeing her son narrowly.

"You are as keen on Carrie as ever, Cyril?"

"Why, yes, I suppose I am. Jolly good sort is Carrie, and as clever as they are

made."

"Oh, yes—I don't want to say anything against Carrie. You know I have never done so," she said pointedly. "But everything will be changed now. Why, Cyril, with your looks and the money behind you, who knows to what you might not aspire? It would be as well not to be too attentive just at present. Take my advice and let

Carrie come round as usual. Don't run after

her."

Cyril pondered on these words while he was making his toilet in the bathroom, which was used indiscriminately as a dressingroom by the whole household, in order to save work and the carrying of water to the bedrooms.

Mrs. Rodney, full of dignity and importance, sailed downstairs, and had to go straight into the drawing-room, into which two ladies had already been shown.

It is astonishing how quickly news of both good and bad fortune can travel. Already the stupendous thing that had happened to the Rodneys had become public property among their friends and acquaintances, and everybody called that afternoon to discover how

they were taking it.

When Estelle came
in she had to dress
hurriedly and run down

to superintend the tea-room, and by five o'clock Mrs. Rodney was holding a sort of court.

Hearing that Eugene Woods was with her father in the morning room, Estelle made a point of slipping in there to say "How do you do?" to him. But she found he had gone.

"I thought Eugene was here, father," said she, with a slight accent of disappoint-

ment in her voice.

"He was, but he has gone. The fortune has scared him away," her father answered ruefully; "and John isn't coming either. I'm afraid we're going to lose some of our friends, Estelle, and there are no friends like the old and tried ones."

"It was stupid of Eugene to go away so soon. I shall scold him next time I see him. Won't you come into the drawing-



" Of course, we'll leave Denmark Hill for a different kind of life. West End style, don't you know.' "

by C. E. Brock room and help mother? I do believe the whole of the chapel is in there now."

But Rodney shook his head and turned rather eagerly towards the door.

"I think I'll take a stroll, my dear. I'm not in a mood for a crowd, and your mother is quite capable of dealing with them."

Estelle wished for the moment that she could accompany him, for she too felt a sudden loathing for the atmosphere of the drawing-room—for the eager, curious crowd, whose questions her mother would doubtless be more than willing to answer. A sort of numbness of spirit began to creep over Estelle. She felt as if all the foundations of life were being shaken, and as if the future stretched away in front full of uncertainty and doubt.

Kathleen came home late, and, on hearing that John Glide had not come and was not coming, seemed disappointed.

Carrie Bygrave was there, looking very sweet and attractive in her exquisitely made black frock. Among a very commonplace crowd she struck an odd note of distinction. The clear pallor of her countenance seemed to make all other faces look crude, highly-coloured—even vulgar. But her expression was sad in the extreme.

"What is it, Carrie? You seem out of sorts," whispered Estelle when they got a moment together.

"I can't tell you, Este, for I don't know. Things are all wrong, somehow, and nothing is the same."

"That's life," said Estelle, and her kind, wide mouth appeared to quiver.

They clasped hands in silence and looked into each other's eyes, both being conscious of that which they could not put into words, but which, being interpreted, meant fear—genuine, undisguised fear of a future unfamiliar, unwelcome, full of menace to their hearts.

CHAPTER VI

LADY HATHERLEY

A STRANGE minister preached at Ebenezer Chapel on Sunday morning, and by some odd coincidence he chose for his text the words: "Where thieves do not break through nor steal."

He knew nothing of the Rodneys, not even having heard their name, but his warning concerning the deceitfulness of riches might have been intended for and addressed to them.

A good many eyes wandered to the Rod-

neys' pew during the discourse, and in sundry there was even a lurking amusement.

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Mrs. Rodney was furious, and some of the younger members of the family felt very uncomfortable. The only perfectly happy and unconscious occupant of the pew was Rodney himself. His serene face, which in church always wore its most beautiful expression—an expression born of a soul that truly worshipped—never altered.

When they came out his wife immediately vented her indignation.

"Of course, either Mr. Pearce or that foolish sister of his has been talking to the strange minister," she said hotly. "There's nothing but envy and jealousy at the bottom of that sort of thing. But people do not do themselves any good by it. I did think of presenting a new font to Ebenezer as a sort of farewell offering, but now I won't—not, at least, unless Mr. Pearce comes properly to explain and apologise."

Cyrus Rodney was amazed at the acidity of his wife's tone, but he felt that protest would be useless. They walked home in an uncomfortable silence.

The day passed as usual. Before their return home Cyril had already gone to the Bygraves'; but, to the surprise of his family, he returned quite early in the evening. Rodney and the two girls had gone to evening service. Julia being out, however, Mrs. Rodney had to keep house. Her son found her sitting at the diningroom table, making calculations on a piece of paper. She looked up in surprise on his entrance.

"You are surely back very early, Cyril It isn't eight o'clock yet."

"No. I got fed up at Clarina Place. There was something the matter with Carrie, and old Bygrave seemed suspicious and nasty. It wasn't good enough. Carrie has got to climb down off her high horse if she's going to be of any use to me. I've always told you that she was a bit uppish. To-night it was insufferable!"

His mother looked sympathetic.

"It's jealousy that is at the bottom of the way people are going on," she remarked wisely. "You should have been at Ebenezer this morning! A lanternjawed person preached about the deceitfulness of riches. The sermon might have been levelled at us. I have no doubt that it was, and that he was put up to it by

Miss Pearce. She has been jealous of

CORRODING GOLD

my influence and standing in the chapel ever since she came. Thank goodness, we'll soon be out of it!"

"What I want to know is whether I am to say anything at Hammond's tomorrow?" remarked Cyril. "I'll be seeing the guv'nor when I go down, though I have to shunt off to Macclesfield by the ten-fity. Suppose it'll be too early days to talk of resigning or anything?"

"I really hardly know what to say, Cyril," said his mother, leaning back in her chair. "It's not too early so far as actual possession of the money is concerned. I have already opened a banking account, and the lawyers told me to draw on them for whatever I wanted. If only your father were a different kind of man! Positively he doesn't take the smallest interest in all this. One would actually think that he would rather the fortune hadn't come."

"Poor old pater!" said Cyril in the half-affectionate, half-compassionate tone one might have used in speaking of a lovable but wholly irresponsible child. "He'll waken up to it presently, however. So will the girls—you just wait! When they've seen a bit of life, like I have, and tasted what it is like to live in a mansion provided with every luxury, probably you'll have something to do to keep 'em in hand."

Cyril spoke with his man-of-the-world air, which never failed to impress his mother, though his sisters openly scoffed at it. His tales of visits to the abodes of merchant princes in the Midlands they accepted with a grain of salt, knowing Cyril's habit of drawing the longbow; but his mother fondly believed that her handsome lad was a persona grata everywhere, and that he only required to be seen and known to obtain the entrée anywhere.

"I don't see that there would be any harm in just mentioning the matter to Mr. Hammond. In fact, in the circumstances, I think you should ask an interview for that purpose. Then hear what he says. He may have some proposition to make, for there isn't any firm which isn't glad to have a prospect of more money coming into it. If you think you will stick to business, Cyril? But I'm thinking of Parliament and so on for you. Why not?"

Cyril pulled up his collar and dragged down his flowered waistcoat with an air. "I don't know exactly whether I'd care about that. Parliament, as at present conducted, is nothing but a jawing machine. But we can see later on as to that," he added grandly. "Well, then, it's O.K. that I go down as usual to-morrow morning and interview old Hammond? Can I tell him how much you have got left?"

"You can just mention that it's about two hundred thousand; besides, there's the sheeprun—perhaps estate would be a better word —which Jack has already in his mind appropriated. He thinks he's going out to

"Well, and he might do worse—the young limb! It's certain he'd never settle to city life. It's happened in the nick of time for young Jack. He might make another fortune out there, who knows?"

Cyril was very fond of Jack, though their tastes lay so far apart. Cyril had never been an athlete or a sport, considering most outdoor games a fag.

"I'd be very glad to have you at home, Cyril, just at present, for I foresee that I'll have to decide most things for myself. About the house, for instance, neither Este nor Kathleen have so much as discussed where we ought to settle when we leave here."

"They don't grip it yet, mater. I don't myself. I'll see what old Hammond says to-morrow morning. I'm rather eager to see his phiz when I mention the sum."

"If you have to go on to Macclesfield, or if you think it will be better not to break off for a week or two, be sure you write and describe the interview," said his mother with much satisfaction. "The coming of this fortune is bound to make a difference in a good many directions."

But in this she was somewhat mistaken. Old Hammond listened politely to his traveller's communication, made a few congratulatory comments, and then plunged into the business for the week. So strong was the domination of that keen business personality over Cyril Rodney that he accepted his employer's instructions as meekly as usual and went out, feeling rather crestfallen.

On Monday the tide of life flowed as usual for the members of the household at The Laurels—for all except Mrs. Rodney, who was becoming more and more conscious of the loneliness of her position. She fancied that nobody sympathised with her or was in the least interested in what had happened.

As a matter of fact, they were all interested in it—were even obsessed by it. Estelle's mind wandered all the morning, and she found it extremely difficult to fix her attention on her work or to give her pupils their c're. She put in a bad morning's work, judged from the standpoint of her employers.

Kathie found plenty to do at Mrs. Dyner's, that lady being laid up and obliged to

dictate from her bed.

As for poor Rodney himself, he mooned about the double-fronted shop in City Road in a manner which troubled John Glide acutely. He could see that the old man was going to be heart-broken by the changes which he was powerless to retard.

About half-past two in the afternoon Mrs. Rodney, dressed in her handsomest clothes, left Denmark Hill and travelled by bus to Victoria, where she alighted and took a taxi, giving an address that she read off a visiting card which, after much hunting, she had discovered in a drawer of the dining-room burear.

It bore the words: "Lady Hatherley, 44

Clanricarde Mansions, S.W.

It was quite a short ride from Victoria to that aristocratic quarter, and when Mrs. Rodney dismissed the man before the imposing block of flats with mahogany swingdoors and a liveried porter airing himself in the vestibule, her mind was hardly prepared for the next step. But, screwing her courage to the sticking-point, she advanced towards the liveried person, and, in what she considered an important voice, inquired for Lady Hatherley.

"In," replied the liveried one briefly, with a magnificent wave of his arm towards the mahogany board bearing the residents' names which hung in the passage. "Lift

to the left, madam-third floor."

Mrs. Rodney passed in, was introduced to the lift, and smoothly swept up to the third floor.

"Fourth door on the right, ma'am," said the boy, and his grin was so expectant that Mrs. Rodney immediately produced a small coin and graciously presented it to him.

Before she had reached the fourth door on the right the lift, in response to an imperative whir of the electric bell, had shot down.

The smallest page boy in the world, who seemed to be entirely covered with shiny brass buttons, answered her somewhat timid press of the electric button, and, without speaking a word, held the door wide open so that she might enter the dark and rather stuffy little hall, which, with its divans, rugs, and heavy draperies, had quite an Eastern look.

"Name, please?" asked the page, pausing with his hand on the drawing-room door.

"Oh, Mrs. Rodney," she answered nervously, and he announced her in a loud voice.

The pretty drawing-room, with its warm, flower-scented air, made a becoming setting for a tall, graceful, and very pretty woman, who, wearing a tea-gown of blue silk and lace, was writing at a buhl table between the two long pink-curtained windows.

She turned her head rather sharply, as if astonished or even resentful, for, though in a good-natured moment at one of Mrs. Dyner's extraordinary "bear gardens"—as Lady Hatherley called them—she had thrown a casual invitation to a woman who had temporarily amused her, in Lady Hatherley's world such invitations are not meant to be accepted.

Mrs. Rodney, in her stiff black satin and velvet brocaded dolman, looked out of place in that dainty little nest, and she herself

felt that she did so.

"Good afternoon, Lady Hatherley," she said, trying to speak naturally, though a little taken aback by the cool steady stare of these wonderful greenish-blue eyes. "Of course, you have forgotten me. I am Mrs. Rodney, Kathleen's mother—Mrs. Dyner, you know—"

"Oh, yes; of course, I remember," said Lady Hatherley, smiling slightly, though, as a matter of fact, she did not in the least remember, and was wondering who the hopeless-looking person could be. "Please excuse me; I was expecting someone else. Won't you sit down?"

Her tone was soft, but distant. Her whole personality, clothed in the wonderful turquoise draperies of a grace and fashion never before beheld or imagined by Mrs. Rodney of Denmark Hill, seemed to level inquiry, swift and incisive, at her caller's

"You were so kind that day at Mrs.

Dyner's that I thought I might venture—"
"Mrs. Dyner's? Mrs. Dyner's? Did I
meet you there? I suppose I must have, but
even now I hardly remember. One meets
so many people, don't you know."

"Yes, of course. But you gave me this and you asked me to call, and you were



" Good afternoon, Lady Hatherley,' she said, trying to speak naturally."

Drawn by C. E. Brock.

so interested about Kathie. You said that she was pretty, and that you would like to dress her.

She fumbled in her little hand-bag, and produced the now soiled piece of paste-

Lady Hatherley, after one swift glance at the clock, smiled faintly.

"Oh, yes-I think I remember. Well, can I do anything for you? I have an appointment at four. We have just fifteen minutes."

"I dare say that will be long enough," murmured Mrs. Rodney, feeling now more at her ease and concluding that Lady Hatherley, as a woman of fashion, had many demands on her time. "I am in need of a little advice. Something has happened to us as a family, Lady Hatherley-something which will make a great difference to us. I have come into some money."

"Oh!" said Lady Hatherley in a more interested tone, for money was the one theme in the world that interested her, and the getting of enough for her needs and wants was the hopelessly insolvable problem of her life. "I am glad to hear of your good fortune. In what way will it make a difference?"

"In every way, I hope. It will have to. It is a large sum of money, Lady Hatherley, which was left by my brother, who was a squatter in Australia.1

"Indeed, that sounds most interesting! We had a Queensland squatter in society last season, simply rolling in money-but such a hard nut, Mrs. Rodney! Would vou believe it?-one could hardly get a sovereign out of him for one's pet charity! And he was so horribly rude to us all, but fascinating-oh, quite fascinating. In the end, however, he married somebody quite impossible-a typist, I believe she wasand went back to Australia to squat. We had a good deal of fun out of him while he lasted-but that was all Of course you have seen The Walls of Jericho, Mrs. Rodney? He was that sort of person."

Mrs. Rodney had never heard of the society play alluded to by Lady Hatherley, but she murmured, "Oh, indeed, was he?" as if she perfectly understood the reference.

"Well now, do tell me about this fortune that has come to you," said Lady Hatherley in more friendly, in fact, quite confidential, tones. "Is it hundreds of pounds, or thousands, or how much?"

"The lawyers say that it is two hundred

thousand, not reckoning the estate," replied Mrs. Rodney with a little thrill in her voice.

"Two hundred thousand, dear lady! How perfectly splendid for you all! I am filled with envy! Just think of poor me dragging out a precarious existence in this horrid little flat on a few hundreds a year, and trying to supplement it by writing society novels which nobody wants to read! Two hundred thousand pounds! Why, you'll be able to do anything, Mrs. Rodney-positively anything-with that amount of money!"

The woman's whole attitude and demeanour had changed in an instant. She sat forward eagerly, playing with the string of uncut turquoise gems suspended from her neck, her eyes literally blazing with

"It is a large sum of money for simple folk, of course, and, feeling that I needed a little advice, I thought of you, Lady Hatherley. You were so kind-talking to me that day at Mrs. Dyner's, where I didn't know anybody and was feeling so horribly out of it."

"Oh, yes, of course. I remember all about it now," said Lady Hatherley, as if a sudden inspiration had come to her. "I remember we agreed that it was an awful crowd, but that Mrs. Dyner was an old dear! Two hundred thousands pounds!" she once more repeated. "Tell me, what do you propose to do with it?"

"We haven't made any plans yet, Lady Hatherley. My family are rather tiresome -all except my eldest son Cyril Mr. Rodney is in business, and he does not seem to be in any hurry to leave it."

"Mr. Rodney in business! Now, come, do tell me all about your household? If I am to be of any use to you I must know all about it. How many children have you? "

"I have five, and of these Estelle is the eldest; she is a teacher. Then comes Cyril; he is twenty-four. Then Kathleen, whom you have seen; then Jack, a sixteenyear-old schoolboy, who will probably go out to the sheep-run-he's mad over the idea. Last, there's Lulu, the baby-she's only eleven."

"Thank you, dear Mrs. Rodney. You have sketched them admirably. I see them every one-your eldest daughter, a little prim and proud; Cyril, handsome and dashing; your pretty Kathleen, who will now have her chance; then the young ones. How you will enjoy launching them all on the new world that this money will open up for you! Where do you live at present?"

"At The Laurels, Bigwood Lane, Den-

mark Hill."

"Where is that?" asked Lady Hatherley in a puzzled voice.

"South of London-Camberwell way, don't

you know?"

"Of course, but I've never been there. We West Enders are really geographically very ignorant, dear Mrs. Rodney. I was brought up in the country. I married when I was very young, and went out with my husband to a Government post in West Africa. He died there—worse luck—and left me badly off. The Government didn't do anything for me—they didn't even continue his pension, though he died of the climate out there in the service of his country. That is the explanation of my position and poverty, Mrs. Rodney, and that is why I have to work so horribly hard, writing books, to help me along."

"Have you any children?"

"No, thank goodness! What should I have done with them? Yes, the wind is tempered a little to the shorn lamb, perhaps. Well, and what is it you would like me

to do for you?"

Her eyes had narrowed, and her small features had taken on a strange sharpness. She no longer looked at the clock or appeared bored and anxious to get rid of her most unexpected caller. Four o'clock tinkled on the little ormolu clock on the white mantel, but nobody came to disturb them.

"I have a lot of ideas, but none of them seem to get into proper shape. Firstly, I shall want my husband to retire from business; he is tired, and he has worked hard for so long. Then we must get a bigger house somewhere, either in London

or in the country."

"London and the country," supplemented Lady Hatherley significantly. "Two hundred thousand, properly invested and judiciously spent, will do all that easily. Then about your family? You would perhaps like your Cyril to get into Parliament. What is he doing just now?"

"He, too, is in business. He represents a large City firm," answered Cyril's mother, careful not to explain that he was a commercial traveller for blouses and ladies' underskirts. "He is very ambitious, and I am ambitious for him. But—but perhaps you can tell us how we ought to proceed and what we ought to do about a house?"

Lady Hatherley leaned back in her chair, and her face became very thoughtful. She saw before her a chance which she could not afford to let slip. But she must first

make very sure of her ground.

"Dear Mrs. Rodney, it is good of you to place such confidence in me," she purred presently. "And I assure you I am immensely interested. I have never forgotten the day on which I met you, nor have I forgotten your pretty Kathleen, whom everybody envies to Mrs. Dyner. I can offer you all sorts of advice, of course. You'll find hundreds eager and willing to advise you, but this thing is not so easy as it looks. I take it that you would like an assured position in society, so as to give your charming daughters and your clever sons their chance."

"Precisely. How clearly you put everything! But, of course, you are so clever and so much in the know!" cried Mrs.

Rodney in a gratified voice.

"I understand the world—my own world, of course," assented Lady Hatherley graciously. "And though I am poor, I am still a person of some account in it. If you would really like me to advise you, Mrs. Rodney—why, then, it would give me a good deal of pleasure to do so. But we should have to go on quite a business footing."

"Yes, of course. I should simply leave

everything to you."

"Oh, that would never do at all! It would lay us both open to all sorts of misrepresentation and misunderstanding. The thing requires diplomacy, dear Mrs. Redney. We shall have to be as wise as serpents and as harmless as doves. You know something about the great world, I suppose? I dare say you have heard that a good many things are now bought and sold in it which used to be got by right of favour only."

Mrs. Rodney's expression convinced Clare Hatherley that she would have to speak more plainly to this unsophisticated creature.

"Presentations at Court, for instance—they can be engineered, and introductions into the most exclusive circles can be arranged, if sufficient money is paid. That is how some outsiders get into society, and they do nobody any harm. Their money helps the general good."

"Then should I have to pay somebody to introduce us?" asked Mrs. Rodney

eagerly.

"That is a very crude way of putting it, my dear, and though between ourselves we might talk like that, it is not spoken of in that way outside. Let us put it more delicately. I am a poor woman, and you are a rich one. By a certain accident of birth, however, I possess certain privileges and advantages which at present you have not, but which you are anxious to secure. Well, I could arrange things. A little honorarium is all I should require. As I have told you, I am a poor woman. I make no bones about that."

Mrs. Rodney's face coloured. To think she should be in a position to offer money to this radiant creature, who belonged to another world altogether! The idea was

almost overpowering.

"Of course, of course! Don't mention it, dear Lady Hatherley, I quite understand. Let us be on a business footing. Whatever you ask for I shall give, for I quite see, now you have pointed it out to me, what difficulties there would be in the way."

"They are stupendous. Unaided, you could not surmount them," said Lady Hatherley as she took her jewelled cigarette case from the mantelshelf. "Supposing you took a large house in one of the fashionable squares and opened it, who would call upon you or enter it? Why, nobody! You need a chaperon just as much as any young girl entering on her first season. I know every-

body. I should be glad to help. It is a little kindness which would interest me, I am fond of young people, and I took a fancy to your Kathleen. Do you understand?"

"I quite understand, dear Lady Hatherley, and it is most awfully good of you to be willing. Would you help me about choos-

ing the house, too?"

"Of course. The very first thing we shall do is to get the house registers and go over them. But we mustn't do anything in a hurry. You will give me a day or two in which to consider matters and to arrange a sort of plan of campaign, won't you?"

"Anything you like, dear Lady Hatherley. I should simply leave myself in your

hands."

"I believe it would be better. Well, I shall think everything over, set all the machinery in motion, and then come out to you to have a long talk."

"Let me come here. I am sure you would

not like Denmark Hill."

"That is immaterial. As I am going to benefit as well as you, we must also share the trouble. Now let us have some tea."

She rose and trailed her turquoise draperies across the floor to the bell-pull.

Mrs. Rodney, now quite at home, began to draw off her large, comfortable, ill-fitting kid gloves.

It was six o'clock before she left the flat in Clanricarde Mansions and journeyed back to Denmark Hill.

[END OF CHAPTER SIX]



"MY LIFE, AND HOW I FACE IT"

The second of the series of articles on "My Life, and How I Face It" will appear in my January number (published December 20) and will give the true story of a German governess alone in London. I am offering cheques for £5 5s. for the life-stories of readers — not exceeding 2,500 words in length. Full particulars will be given in my January number.

MY DREAM NEWSPAPER

By JOHN FOSTER FRASER

Author of " Life's Contrasts"

Christmas is the time when we dream dreams of the world as it ought to be. Many people see visions of the transformations they would effect if they were Kings or Presidents, but Mr. Fraser dreams of being a newspaper Editor, and here is the substance of his dream.

I WANT to believe in reincarnation. Because in the beautiful future I want to come on earth again and be the editor of a newspaper. There is no newspaper in the world that is anything like that newspaper will be. Yet there might be. There is nothing to hinder it—except that I am afraid people would not read it.

But when I sit alone in my room, when

the brain is weary and fingers ache with much writing, when the curtains are drawn, and the lights low and the fire glows friendly. I often dream of that wonderful newspaper. It will be so different from the journals of to-day. and it will give the news which will be of service. Still even now I sometimes see a flicker of light in the grey columns of our modern Press-just a flash and then it is gone and fo gotten-which shows the same thought occasionally creeps into the minds of other men.

For thirty years—ever since I was a lanky lad at school—I have been

doing journalistic work. My experience has run the whole gamut, from reporting "drunks" in the police court on Monday mornings to acting as special correspondent in Macedonia during times of race and religious hatred and terrible butcherings; and in between have been descriptions of notorious cases in the divorce court, trials of murderers and blackguards innumerable, railway accidents, colliery disasters, all the dramatic and

sensational events which go to the making of "news."

The Mirror of Life

Often I read and hear complaints about newspapers being too sensational, that they minister too much to the craving for what is morbid. But newspapers are reflections of the public mind; and as

there are all sorts of people, so there are all sorts of newspapersexcept that there are no newspapers so prurient as are some sections of the public. The man and ordinary inclined woman. to criticise the Press for what it publishes, are generally those who know nothing whatever about the scrupulous care taken by all newspapers which count to hide the gross details of cases which journalists often report. Indeed, writing in general terms, newspapers are cleaner than the public mind. There are inferior journals which go a long way toward contribut-



Mr. J. Foster Fraser.

Photo:

ing to the appetite for sensation. Some of them have enormous circulations, but that means there are immense masses of people who desire the things which these papers give. I grieve over both, but it is the public which decides the circulation

of a newspaper.

So it is that our daily sheets, whilst providing the useful intelligence of the world, satisfying curiosity about the sayings and doings of the principal people in the world, give much space to recounting events which reveal the baser traits in our nature. An ingeniously planned and diabolical murder mystery fills long columns of the Press. A tremendous financial swindle, plunging thousands into ruin, is described with complete minutiae. All the things which men and women ought not to do receive elaborate attention. The public delight in the gruesome, the tragic side of life, and they maintain a constant inquisitiveness about the lapses of their fellows.

The Drama of the Unreported

If a stranger from another planet visited us and drew his conclusions about human nature from the pictures given in newspapers, he would be saddened. But also he would be misinformed. For whilst in my life I have become acquainted with much wickedness, whilst I know that the full story is not always told, for it would be too distressing, I have come too close to the hearts of men and women not to be aware there are other characteristics which ought to be just as interesting; that there are actions just as dramatic, but which never get the honour of a paragraph in any of our journals.

That is a gap which my newspaper in the future—at present, alas! only a dream—will be able to fill.

Not long ago there appeared columns in the Press about the shocking cruelty to a girl by her mistress. Wherever one went people were talking about the trial. But in my dream newspaper very little space would be given to a case of this kind. For the world has much more goodness in it than evil, though people are somewhat reluctant to admit the fact. None of us, however, are quite so good as those who love us think we are, and none of us are so bad as we frequently accuse ourselves of being. Instead of columns being given presenting the details of the conduct of a heartless mistress to her servant, I should like to have a staff who would seek out the kindly actions that are done, and which would give inspiration to other folk who read about them. We have little in our modern Press about the goodhearted mistress, the woman who does her best to make pleasant the lives of those not so happily placed as herself.

Do we not all know the woman who spends years in solacing the sick and the needy? She has none of the physical attractions of her more beautiful and lighter-hearted sisters. But the warmth of generosity within her bosom sends her on beautiful missions to succour the distressed and careworn. She never gets a paragraph in the newspaper. Surely a column written about what she has accomplished, bringing sunshine into dark places, would be worth reading. She would be looked after in the newspaper of my dreams.

Heroes in Drab

Take up any journal, and it is likely you will find a police-court account of the heartless conduct of a man who has neglected the care of his children. In my paper there would be told the story of men who work hard and long, and for a poor wage-men who strive to feed and clothe their children, even though they themselves go short-men who do not grumble, but who heroically do their little fight in the world-men who are not brilliant, who are just drab and mediocre, but who give their ten and twenty years of service to others. We hear little about such men in our newspapers. Yet I often think they are more deserving of journalistic attention than the unfortunate creature who, soddened by drink, lapses from his duties to his children. And there are millions of such men in the world.

What bright, happy, gaily written descriptions appear in all the London papers during what is called the "season," about society's doings. There are accounts of the sybarite luxury of the present day, the gorgeous dinner parties, the crowded "At Homes," and much space is devoted to elaborate descriptions of dresses worn by lovely ladies. We read about the tiaras upon the brows of countesses at the opera, and the weeks which have been devoted by titled dames to preparations for the success of fancy-dress balls at the Albert Hall.

Yes; these are pleasant things to read about. But there is another picture which, whilst not so gaudy, is more beautiful, because it is more elevating, and about which little is ever written. There is the

poor mother, with her large family, who is doing a worthier service to humanity than these charming and gracefully gowned society ladies. There is the widow, who is never more than half a crown away from starvation, who finds it hard to get butter to put upon the bread of her childrenthe woman whom you may see, if you are out early enough, washing the steps of offices in the City of London; or who, bedraggled and dingy, you may meet slowly crawling home, utterly worn out, after a day of charing. I know such women. And what always strikes me as refreshing about them is that they never grumble. They just do the work which comes to them, and are grateful if they have enough money to pay the rent, and to provide their children with a little meat for dinner on the Sunday. The nobility—and it is nobility—in the lives of these poor, shrunken, bent-bodied women will receive honour in that newspaper of which I dream.

I pick up a London morning paper, and I read that yesterday the delightful Miss So-and-So was riding in the Row. I read of some dainty debutante being all smiles and laughter, and how popular she is amongst what are called her set. I read of how the fair daughters of a great lord are going to the Riviera or proceed-

ing to Scotland.

Heroism on Sandwiches

But I never read of the young women whom I often encounter when taking my walk in the Park before breakfast, any time between seven and nine. If you take a stroll in any of our great London parks at these hours you will see thousands of girls, not very attractive, maybe frowsy in costume, possibly decorated with wretched cheap imitation jewellery, all hurrying, and nearly all carrying little brown-paper parcels under their arms. In these parcels are their luncheons. They are off to work in warehouses, to toil in the cellars of dressmakers, or to grow wan and anæmic in hot, close, ill-ventilated offices. There is nothing about their appearance to stir your chivalry; yet one knows they are working for their living, and that often their scanty wages are much wanted at home. People are inclined to make fun of their pretensions in dress, and to smile because their taste in literature is toward sloppy novels, in which the earl falls in love with the poor but beautiful music-teacher. And yet the writers for that newspaper, which floats in my mind's eye, will think that stories about the sacrifices of these poor girls will be quite as worth the telling as the fact that Lady Gwendoline is proceeding to join her uncle's yacht in the Solent.

We worship success. We take off our hats to the men who have achieved things. Whether it be the victor in battle or the man who has built up a great commercial enterprise, or the great painter or musician, we offer incense at the shrine of their accomplishments. Yet, when we think quietly about it, success is one of the easiest things in the world. It comes generally to the man who has the faculty and the instinct, more often than to him who toils laboriously. Indeed, it is the path of failure, and not the path of success, that is roughest to travel.

Those who have not Won

Whenever I see prizes given at schools, or watch a coveted trophy handed over to a team which has won the blue ribbon in athletic endeavour, and listen to the cheers of the crowd, my thoughts go to those who have not won. They have striven just as hard; probably they have striven harder. They deserve our admiration, but seldom do they get it. Look along the range of your acquaintances, and you know how, generally speaking, prosperity has come to many, possibly to most, with little striving on their part. Think also of those acquaintances who have not succeeded in forging ahead, and very likely you will find thay are just as good men, frequently better men, than the others. You know how they have been putting forth all their energies, but always missing the reward. I wonder if in that newspaper of the future the readers will be interested in the things which will be written in praise of the failures of the world? I hope so, for there is always much to be said in behalf of those who have tried, but have lost the victory.

In my dream newspaper of the future there will be little record of crimes committed by the few, but some endeavour to show how great and widespread is

THE QUIVER

the charity of the many. Instead of stories about murders, I would appeal to the interest of my readers with stories of the life sacrifice of men and women in order to provide comfort and shelter, and some happiness, for those who are dependent on them. Instead of columns being devoted to the empty pleasures of what is frequently described as the Smart Set, I would tell of the real joy in the hearts of people—and they are legion—when they do kindly acts in providing food and clothing for those who are unfortunate.

Sometimes I hear men preach about the growing wickedness of the world. They are quite wrong. The world was never a better place to live in than now, and never was there more real Christianity than there is to-day. Hearts are just as tender as ever they were; but it is our newspapers which give prominence to cases of hard-heartedness and sordid pleasures and the evils which exist. The badness in the world is insignificant compared with the goodness. We should do well to think more of the bright and beautiful things in life. In that distant dream newspaper of mine much attention will be paid to worthy actions, so that the reader will not put down the journal with a sigh, but with a smile of gladness,

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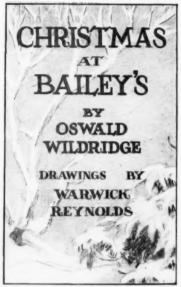
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WHEN the first of the feathery snowflakes came drifting over the big brown moor and dropped into the twistabout streets of Billinge, everybody rubbed their hands gleefully and nodded and smiled, and told everybody else that this year, at any rate, we were going to have an oldfashioned Christmas: none of your green sort, with ochreish skies and murky streets, but a white Christmas, with Red Rake hill, under which the town so snugly nestles, enchantingly draped right up to the Russian guns on the ridge, and the park turned into a fragment of fairyland, and the avenue of limes on the Broad Walk frosted to the shine of silver, and, to put it all in a sentence, the grim old town of cotton factories a city of winter glory. Of course, there were other reasons for the rejoicing. The tradesmen rubbed their hands and smiled because a white Christmas means brisk business for everybody instead of only for the few; and the boys and girls were overjoyed because of the tobogganing down Beardwood Brow and a host of other brows, and all the rest were glad, because-well, because Christmas with snow on the ground and frost in the air is just what Christmas ought to be.

Bailey, of course, was the one exception. He was hardly ever known to rejoice about anything; and not a man, woman, or child

among the hundred thousand odd in Billinge could say that they had seen him rub his hands. His name in all its fullness was Richard James Bailey, after his two grandfathers; and occasionally, when it appeared in the "Courier," it was given the affixed distinction of "Esquire"; but to the man in the street he was Bailey, without any trimmings; to the old stagers in the factories he was Owd Bailey's Lad, and by his own spinners and weavers he was known as "th' Young Mestur," but there was no lingering affection in the nickname such as you got from the mill-folk when they spoke of "th' Owd Gam' Cock." In his own home, moreover, little Peggy and Jack always called him " Farver "-never anything else; for right at the beginning of the baby days Bailey himself decreed that he must never be called "Daddy" or "Dad." Life he held to be a serious thing, and to be seriously dealt with even by infant lips; so there were to be no pet names and no foolish baby-talk, and no silly fancies about fairies, and no wicked extravagance at Christmas or any other time. He would give his children all the love of his heart, but no marring indulgence, no vain imaginings of poesy or romance.

The chief trouble with Richard Bailey lay in the fact that he was his father's son.

When Owd Bailey died it was said of him that his outlook had been the bleakest that any man could hold, and also that in all his threescore years he had never given himself the joy of making a present, nor had he ever known the pleasure of receiving one, And Richard was a chip off the old block. He was not a miser, but he had had the training of one: he was not even selfish, but he had been brought up in a stifling atmosphere and his instinct for good had never had a breathing chance.

" A modern Spartan" is the description applied to him by the Rector at one of the deanery dinners. "He has placed utility on a pedestal," the Rector proceeded, " and he himself is its most devout worshipper, Practicality is one of his watchwords. Simplicity is another. As rules of conduct both are excellent, but he goes too far, and instead of proclaiming the wickedness of waste he is merely revealing the peril of extremes. I could give you a dozen examples, but that of Christmas will suffice. Because some people spend more than they can afford in gifts and merry-making, he would destroy the festival root and branch, and, being honest enough to practise what he preaches, he has bolted the door of his own home against it. The house of Bailey knows nothing of holly and mistletoe, of presents or cards; there is no turkey and plum pudding and no greetings. 'A Merry Christmas' is anathema to him."

" Do you mean to say," the silvery-haired Canon inquired, "that he has never given either of his children a Christmas present?"

"They have never been allowed to hear the name of Father Christmas-that is part of the Spartan treatment; nor have they ever known the ecstasy of hanging up a stocking on Christmas Eve. They have never been permitted a peep into fairy-land, and their toys are of the simplest-Dutch dolls and the cheapest of cheap picture books."

"Umph! Practicality, indeed! I would call it meanness-sheer, vulgar greed."

" And there you would make a mistake," the Rector blandly replied. "In place of presents he has opened banking accounts for his wife and bairns, and he recognises their birthdays and Christmastide by payments in cash or by cheque. Besides, whenever I have a case of real hardship on my hands he is one of the first I go to, and he never sends me empty away."

" But what about his wife?" the Canon protested, the life of Billinge being to him " She must be as only a half-opened book. mad as the man himself."

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Again the Rector smiled.

"You don't know Ruth Bailey," he said. "She is one of the pluckiest little souls in the town, long-headed and far-seeing also. She professes complete accord with her husband's ideals, and-unless I am much mistaken-she is biding her time, living in faith and hope, which is a better way than hoisting the flag of rebellion when you have an obstinate man to deal with. there's always little Peggy and Jack, and children have shaken a good many systems before to-day."

Just about the time that the snowfeathers began to dust the town. Richard Bailey passed from his cloth-warehouse into his weaving-shed and gazed gloomily at the maze of racing pulleys, glancing shuttleboxes, and darting picking-sticks, all knitting yarn and weft into cotton cloth, under a blazing constellation of gas-jets. Even here, amid the steamy atmosphere, the oily odours and the deafening clang, the spirit of Christmas held full sway, and as one able to read the signs he knew that the very bustle of the place was a product of the season, that the girls whose bodies were rhythmically swaying with hands outstretched on the long, red slay-caps were helping the looms to a greater output so that their own spending might be greater too.

As a rule, when Richard Bailey paid a visit to his weaving-shed it was his custom to walk the length of one or two of the alleys, but to-night he felt out of place, as though he had no right there at all. If he was not in a hostile world he was at least in one of many discords. The shed oppressed him; its blend of hustle and gaiety was an offence; he desired only to get away; and so he went no farther than the first tacklers' bench and then returned to his own office. Although he knew it not, he had really run away from Christmas.

When the hum of the mills died down into silence and the myriad lights were all extinguished, he drove through the heart of the town to his home on the northern bluff, with the glorious woods at the back and at the front the radiant plains of Amounderness rolling right away to the sea and the misty hills, and still his gloom sat heavily upon

CHRISTMAS AT BAILEY'S

him. Ruth met him with a smile and the children with a joyous cry of "Farver"; but their presence seemed to accuse him of some unnamable offence, and their smiles condemned. Soon, of course, the little folks became conscious of the strain, for, where children are concerned, moods are every whit

as forcible as words, and when they gathered about the

fire, instead of mounting to his knees, they settled down on the hearthrug, and it was there that Peggy made her grand attack.

"Jacky," she began, laying aside her wooden doll, "does you know that it's only free sleeps to Kismas, and then when I goes to bed I'se going to hang my stocking up?"

Across the hearth Richard Bailey flashed a startled look, and then he turned to the child and his lips moved; but Ruth held up a warning finger, and somehow the words died without utterance.

" Hang oor 'tocking up?" Jack chortled. " Wha' for?"

Peggy nodded her golden head sagely.

"'Cause it's Kismas Eve, and Farver Kismas'll be coming down the chimney, and mebbe he'll put somefing in."

Again that warning glance from the wife. To her this was an hour of supreme crisis.

Her husband's chance had come. Opportunity was knocking at the door, and upon his answer a great issue depended. For neither of them would life ever be quite the same again. It would either be fuller and more richly tinged with joy, or narrower and lonelier. Henceforth there would be more sunshine or more gloom. And so she insisted that the little folks should at least have a hearing, and, strangely enough, their father had no fancy for defiance.

"Who is Farver Kismas?" Jack asked, his eyes wide with eager questioning.



" Please, Farver Kismas, I'd like a dolly "-p, 200.

Drawn by Warwick Reynolds

"Oh, he's a kind ole man, and he lives wiv some berry nice people called fairies, and every Kismas he fills a great big sledge wiv lubly dolls and toy horses and t'umpets and drums—and—and—oh, lots of fings, and he goes driving all over the world when lickle

boys and girls are fast asleep, and he comes down the chimneys, and if he sees a stocking hanging on the bed he fills it wiv-oh, wiv all sort of fings. Course you've got to let him know what you'd like. Lori Fisher has writed a letter to tell him what she wants, but she says it's just as gool if you shout up the chimney, 'cause he can hear if he's fousands of miles away. So I'se going to shout, though "-here the little lips quivered, and Richard fancied that he could see the shine of tears in the eyes-" though, I 'spect it'll be no good, for he doesn't seem to know 'bout you and me. Dora says he's comed to their house ever since she was a teeny weeny baby; but he-he's nebber gived us anyfing. Dora says he's sure to have come, for he doesn't miss anybody, and he's gone away wivout leaving anyfing, 'cause we've not hanged our stockings up, for he nebber does leave anyfing if there isn't a stocking there."

Master Jack had heard enough. Eager for action, he scrambled to his feet and held out his hand.

"Tum on, Peggy!" he cried. "Let us s'out now 'fore he goes away."

Together, hand in hand, the little folks stepped across the hearthrug, and Peggy, bending low, lifted her voice to its highest pitch and cried her wants up the big, black

gap.

"Please, Farver Kismas, Jacky and me's going to hang our stockings up this time, and we don't want you to forget us. I'd like a dolly in mine, one wiv real golden hair and eyes what shut and open, and clo'es to take off wiv real buttons and hooks and eyes, and real stockings and nice brown boots. And please, Farver Kismas, one like Dora Fisher's got'll do. And it's for me, Peggy Bailey, and I do want you to bring somefing nice for Jacky as well."

"Yes, Farver Kismas," Master Jack piped, "p'ease b'ing me a wocking horse and a whip and a d'um and—and—and anyfing else you've gotted. And—and if you tant det the wocking horse down the chimney, p'ease leave it on the step, and I'll ask Polly to fetch it in."

It was a great exploit. Rapturously the children nodded and smiled and chattered, and were thrilled with a delight of expectation such as they had never known before, and then impulsively Peggy turned about and laid a hand on her father's arm.

"Farver," she began, "do you weally fink-"

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But her father muttered something about having "some work to do," and hurried away to his own room, and not until the children were on their way to bed did he see them again. As for Ruth, she also sought the solitude of her room; but while her husband worried by the hearth the wife knelt by her bedside.

Christmas Eve dawned white and cheery, with the house of Bailey a house of battling emotions. Sarah Brown, the cook, went about with a sulky face and grumblingly protested to Polly Harrison, the housemaid that it was " making her fair badly to listen to them two angel darlings talking about what they weren't going to get and about the stockings that were going to be as empty in the morning as when they were hung up," and that she " would sooner be that there Robinson Crusoe on his desperate island than cast away in a house where somebody whose name she wouldn't mention was no better than a black heathen, not keeping Christmas as it ought to be kept." As for Peggy and Jack, they could think and talk of nothing but the stockings of romance, while their mother went through the day with a heart of lead. Hope had failed her: its last shred was almost gone now. On that little drama by the fireside she had built with confidence a beautiful superstructure; but alas! it had proved as flimsy as the air in , which it was reared; to such an appeal as that made by her children she had been sure that the love of fatherhood must yield and give to her little ones the treasured wealth of Christmastide, and to herself the joy that to other mothers was granted without the asking; but all was blank, bitter disappoint-Two days had gone by without a sign. Only Richard's face was sterner and his lips more tightly set. He had even stayed late at the mill each night-an obvious device to avoid the prattle of Peggy and Jack.

For Richard himself that day was a veritable nightmare; he who had flouted the spirit of Christmas was now haunted by it. He threw himself with feverish energy into his work, but in five minutes he was leaning back in his office chair with all his thoughts concentrated on his two sunny mites; he hurried away to the weaving-shed, but to-day the looms had found a new song, their thou-

CHRISTMAS AT BAILEY'S

sand voices were united in a mocking chorus of "Merry Christmas." There was really no reason why he should have selected that day for a visit to the bank, but his uncontrollable restlessness drove him forth, and that, you see, was how he drifted into the crowd that thronged the toy-shop window in the market place. It was a doll in a blue frock, with a mass of golden hair and brown shoes, that first laid siege to his fancy, and he actually smiled and murmured,

pendant set with diamonds would look if only Ruth were wearing it. But again the smile was killed by a frown, and the stern resolve to keep his colours flying. This time his resolution carried him at least one hundred yards nearer the mill, but hard by the post office there was a window with a gorgeous collection of Christmas crackers and chocolate boxes and dainty sweets, and again he wavered. Indeed, he felt positively curious on his own account about those



"To-night the room contained something new. On the corner-post of each bed a stocking had been hung"-p. 202.

Drawn by W. Reynolds.

"Just the thing. Exactly what Peggy wants," He not only joined the crowd but pressed close up to the window and almost forgot where he was. He ended his reverie by making a move towards the door, but right on the threshold his face hardened, and he hurried off along the street. "I'll not give way," he muttered. "I'll not. If it was foolishness last year, it is foolishness still." Only a little way had he gone, however, when the flashing gems displayed in a jeweller's beguiled him, and once more his face lighted up as he thought how well that

crackers; he wondered whatever they could have inside their crinkly wrappers; and as for the chocolate boxes, he longed to see Peggy and Jack exploring their mysterious depths. If only he had been content to live on a more commonplace plane! He sighed as he remembered that he was one of those unfortunate mortals, a man with a mission; he was inclined to pity himself as a martyr whose devotion to a good cause was driving him against his will. And then pride laid its lash across his shoulders; he grew hot with anger and reviled himself for his

weakness. But he would end it now. As Christmas had been, so it should remain; and when they reached years of discretion, his children would rise and call him blessed for having trained them to walk in a path of wisdom.

So he went back to his cotton mills, and there, on the pretence of business pressure, he remained long after all the others had gone home, though in truth it was cowardice and not industry that chained him. He was still afraid to meet Peggy and Jack. Moreover, he was not quite sure now about his wife. She had left him to fight his battlenot a word had she said to influence him; but he suspected that he could no longer count upon her as his most faithful ally. There were a bundle of trifling circumstances he had not been able to close his eyes to; and to-night another was added to the total, for the moment she heard his step in the hall Ruth hurried to meet him-how she had hoped that he would come home laden with parcels in sign of an eleventh-hour surrender! -and when she saw that he was emptyhanded the light died out of her eyes, and the colour from her cheeks; and when he weakly pleaded that his day was not yet done, she merely nodded her head and left

Entering his own den he sat down at his desk, but in a few minutes he was restlessly pacing the floor, and finally he flung himself into the depths of his big arm-chair and sat there moodily staring into the glowing heart of the fire. Down in the hall the grandfather's clock boomed out eight solemn strokes. He wondered whether Peggy and Jack would be asleep yet. At any other time he would have gone to see : but-to-nightit would be a shame to disturb them-he would give them a little longer. There was Ruth also. On other nights, when he was busy, she had kept him company, sitting by the fire as quiet as a mouse while he worked. But to-night she was sitting alone; and other mothers were dealing with childish stockings and a host of gifts, or reading the greetings on the latest delivery of Christmas cards, or else giving a hand with the Christmas dinner preparations.

Again the warning voice of the clock. A quarter past eight! He must be going downstairs. This was not fair to Ruth. Half-past eight! He really would go now. But first of all he would peep at the children

in their beds; they would surely be asleep by this time. So, with noiseless tread, he passed along the corridor and pushed open the nursery door. Within all was very dim, for the only illumination was that shed by the nightlight, and for a few seconds he remained motionless, listening to the breathing of the sleepers. Except for seeing the little folks themselves he had no need of light, for in all his world there was nothing so familiar to him as the fittings of this room-Peggy's bed there to the left, Jack's over in the far corner, and the little table and the chairs. His eyes becoming accustomed to the gloom, he made a move forward, but suddenly halted, overwhelmed with dismay. To-night the room contained something new. On the corner-post of each bed a stocking had been hung!

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Long and limp and dark, there they drooped, convincing testimony of childish faith, silent witnesses of childish trust. But Richard Bailey knew that they were doomed also to be messengers of disappointment—his messengers. The stockings were empty now, and when the morrow dawned they would still be empty.

By and by he roused himself, and, going between the beds, looked down first on one and then on the other curly head nestling on its pillow. He seemed to feel the clinging touch of warm, loving arms about his neck, the press of baby lips upon his face. And the stockings would be empty in the morning!

After this he went back to the foot of Peggy's bed, and then to Jack's, and again looked closely at each of the stockings; and now he remembered that there were thousands of others hanging just like these, and he wondered whether of all that host any would be empty besides Peggy's and Jack's. He had never dreamt that stockings could be so eloquent, so gifted with accusing power, so convincing in their demand. It was almost uncanny; an act of wizardry. These two, since he entered the room, had shattered his system, had blotted out his rules of life, and all they had left was Peggy and Jack, and Ruth his wife and himself. There was nothing else that mattered. He was a beaten man-but wonderfully glad. Reluctantly at last he tore himself away and again edged in between the beds; but now a mist had gathered about his eyes, and the sleepers were concealed. And so he left them.

CHRISTMAS AT BAILEY'S

He found Ruth crouching despondently by a cheerless grate, symbol of her own desolation; but after a single hurried glance she sprang to her feet and crossed quickly to his side.

"What is it, Dick?" she cried. "Are you ill?"

He smiled wanly and shook his head.

"No, I'm not ill, dear. I—I've been having an argument. I think I've had a thousand of them lately, and I've won every time. But now, to-night—"

"Yes—now—tonight!" she burst out, half divining his meaning, her heart clamouring for the complete revelation.

"To-night I have met with an argument that I cannot answer. It is the argument of an empty stocking."

"Oh, Dick!"

Afterwards Richard told her that her cry was the sweetest psalm of thanks-giving he had ever listened to; that never, until the flash-

ing of that wonder light in her eyes, had he realised the possibilities of human joy. But now he was in a desperate hurry, and gave her no time for wonder or for questions.

"Hurry up and get your things on, little woman," he begged her. "We've got a lot to do, you and I. I guess the shops won't close so soon on Christmas Eve, and I'll get Tom to bring the brougham round, and we'll away to town and have the greatest time we've ever had since Peggy came to live at our house. Christmas is on its way, and this year it's coming to Bailey's."

That was probably the most tempestuous



"The man would have rushed to the very limit if Ruth had not been present to restrain him."

Drawn by W. Reynolds.

shopping expedition in the history of Billinge. Away they drove to the big shop with the legend "Toy Bazaar" over the entrance, and there the man who for so long had preached against extremes would have rushed right to the very limit if Ruth had not been present to restrain him.

"Oh, but I've got such a lot of back numbers to make up," he pleaded. "It isn't one Christmas but half a dozen we've got to celebrate this year."

But Ruth insisted on moderation, and declared that she was not going to have the children spoiled. So she had her way; but even then there was such a lot to be done and such a short time to do it in, and such a bewildering array of dolls and clockworks and Teddy Bears, and the latest things in this and the latest in that, and so much wandering about from one department to another that in the bustle they lost each other, and when at last they met again Dick looked quite hot and flurried.

From the toys Ruth was for getting back home, but now Dick insisted on some Christmas crackers.

"Just think of it," he said; "our Peggy has never pulled a Christmas cracker! I wouldn't miss those for worlds, and I know a shop where they sell some of the dinkiest crackers in B'llinge. I nearly bought a few boxes this afternoon, only—well, that was one of the arguments I won."

After this he insisted that each of the servants must have a present, and what with one thing and another they only managed to finish as the market bell ceased its ringing. And at Billinge the market bell is the shoppers' curfew, and when the last of its warning notes has been struck, all the buying and selling is just as good as done.

Happy as the happiest bairn in all the world at Christmastide, Richard and Ruth drove home to play at Father Christmas in the nursery where their little ones were sleeping, and to make their house look as Christmassy as loving hands could make it, and also to begin in very truth a new life; and when all had been done they had so much to tell each other that the great day was several hours old before they went to bed. In spite of this, however, they were astir before the children, for they were deter-

mined to miss nothing of the day's joy, and at the first drowsy sound they hurried to the half-open door. A few moments of silence, and then Peggy bounded up in bed, and her voice was uplifted in a rapturous shout,

"Oh, Jack! He's been—he's been! He hasn't forgotted us this time! Look at my dolly wiv her blue frock! And look at your wocking horse! And look at them funny fings in pretty green paper! And look—and look! And oh, here's farver and muvver! Isn't it lubly! And it's all 'cause we hanged our stockings up!"

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One other surprise awaited the Bailey family. When they gathered for breakfast, there at the head of the table was a parcel addressed to "Mother, with Father Christmas's compliments"; and when the wrapping was removed there was revealed a beautiful pendant set with diamonds. Oddly enough, it was the very article that Dick had so much admired as it lay in the jeweller's window. And oddly enough, also, Ruth linked it with her husband's disappearance from the toy shop.

"So that was why we lost each other," she said,

Half-way through the meal Peggy slipped from her chair, and, going round to her father's side, laid a hand upon his arm.

"Oh, farver," she said, "I'se so berry sorry. You're the only one who's been forgotted. Farver Kismas hasn't brought you anyfing."

Dick put his arm round the little maid and drew her closely to him.

"Child," he replied, "he has given me a wonderful present—more than he has given anyone else. He has given me Christmas."



THE CHRISTMAS LARDER

Home Department Pages for December

By BLANCHE ST. CLAIR

THE stocking of the Christmas larder is a very important business. Unwritten laws demand that certain seasonable delicacies must be provided, and although there is some little latitude in these rules family tradition often steps in and draws an even stricter line between the "to be" and the "not to be."

This year Christmas Day falls on a Thursday, so the housewife can, armed with a well-planned and carefully considered list, comfortably accomplish her shopping early in the week. It is very probable that many of the large shops and stores will remain closed until Monday, the 29th, and there is really no reason against and a great many in favour of this arrangement. At this time of the year foods of every kind keep perfectly for several days, and even if the home larder is not suitable for hanging the Sunday roast of sirloin or mutton, a piece of salted silverside or pickled beef can be substituted, or a pie or casserole take the place of the usual joint.

The following list shows at a glance the articles of food that are in season, and from which the housewife can make her choice.

Fish

Brill, cod, fresh and dried haddocks, halibut, herrings, red mullet, plaice, skate, smelts, sprats, soles, whiting, bloaters, filleted haddock, red herrings, kippers and "Digby chicks."

Shell Fish

Oysters, shrimps, scallops and lobsters.

Poultry and Game

Black game, capons, fowls, ducks, geese, hares, grouse (until the 18th), partridges, pheasants, plover, ptarmigan, rabbits, turkeys, widgeon and woodcock.

Vegetables

Jerusalem artichokes, beetroot, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, celery, winter spinach and greens, leeks, parsnips, salsify, savoys, curly kale, seakale, Spanish and English onions, turniptops and late vegetable marrows.

Fruit

For cooking: Apples, cranberries, and forced rhubarb.

For dessert: Apples, oranges, tangerines, bananas, figs, melons, grapes, raisins, pears, plums and pomegranates.

Nuts

Coco-nuts, brazils, chestnuts, barcelonas, filberts, almonds and walnuts.

Meat

Home-bred: Beef, mutton, veal, and pork.
Imported: "Canterbury" mutton, and
"chilled" beef from America.

Truly a long and varied list, from which it should not be difficult to draw up suitable menus.

Shop Early

At such a busy season as Christmas it is satisfactory both to oneself and to the tradespeople with whom one deals to place the necessary orders in good time. The markets will be stocked with the final deliveries of poultry and produce on Monday or Tuesday, and one of these days should be set aside for purchasing the Christmas supplies.

Orders for even the perishable goods, such as fish and fresh meat, can be given, as the tradespeople like to know approximately what will be required, but the wise housewife will call at such shops before the articles are delivered so that she may examine them, and see that they are exactly what she wants.

A Suggested Solution of the Food Problem

For a family of four—father, mother, two young children and one maid. House-keeping allowance ordinarily £2 per week, 10s, extra for Christmas week.

The father will be at home for all meals, but the children go to bed before eight o'clock supper.

835

THE QUIVER

Christmas Day

Breakfast: Porridge. Dried haddock. Dinner: Roast turkey (stuffed), bread sauce. Boiled gammon, potatoes, sprouts. Plum pudding, sweet sauce. Dessert.

Tea: Brown bread and butter, fancy biscuits, Christmas cake.

Supper: Cold gammon. Mince pies.

Bank Holiday

Breakfast: Bread and milk. Grilled bloaters.

Cold turkey and gammon, Dinner: Kolcannon. Mince pies, sago pudding.

Tea: Toasted scones, bread and butter,

Supper: Kedgeree, baked apples.

Saturday

Breakfast: Quaker oats. Ham toast.

Dinner: Beefsteak pudding, cabbage, potatoes. Fruit salad (made from the apples, oranges, and bananas left over from dessert).

Tea: Hot buttered toast, bread and butter, shortbread.

Supper: Devilled turkey legs, chipped potatoes. Jam tarts.

Sunday

Breakfast: Rice milk. Scrambled eggs on toast.

Dinner: Boiled silverside, carrots, turnips, potatoes and dumplings. Fried slices of plum pudding, hot blancmange.

Tea: Jam sandwiches, dry toast and butter, Christmas cake,

Supper: Cold beef or sardines. Baked custard, tinned apricots.

Monday

Breakfast: Porridge. Dried sprats.

These menus are very plain and straightforward, and it will be noticed that the dishes suggested for the evening meals can, to a great extent, be prepared early in the day.

To be Ordered

From the grocer: In addition to the ordinary requirements of tea, coffee, sugars, butter, etc., the following items must not be forgotten: Oatmeal, cornflour, fancy biscuits, Quaker oats, cooking butter and lard (for pastry and basting the bird), flour, sago, rice, cooking eggs, sardines and

apricots, gammon, figs, dates, tinned almonds, raisins, etc.

From the fishmonger: Dried haddock cod (for kedgeree), bloaters, dried sprats.

From the greengrocer: Potatoes, sprouts, apples (for baking and dessert), onions, cabbage, carrots, turnips, chestnuts, pa sley, oranges, bananas and nuts.

From the poulterer: Turkey, sausages, From the butcher: Beefsteak, suet, and a joint.

From the confectioner: Shortbread, scones, If the plum pudding, mince meat, and Christmas cake are not home-made, these, too, must be included in the list.

Notes

If the children make their breakfast off porridge, followed by bread and iam or golden syrup, a large haddock will provide enough fish for the kedgeree, and cod need not be ordered. If, however, the fresh fish is preferred, it should be boiled or steamed, and the bones and skin removed as soon as it is sent in on Wednesday.

Order and have cooked an extra halfpound of sprouts which, with any cold potatoes left over from a previous meal, can be fried together for "kolcannon" on Boxing Day.

Mince pies are not very wholesome for children, so try to persuade them to eat some of the sago pudding with them. The milk pudding and pastry go excellently together.

When boiling rice for the kedgeree, cook sufficient for Sunday morning's rice and milk.

The remains of the gammon grated or minced will provide " ham " for the ham toast.

The beefsteak should be cut into neat pieces, rolled in flour flavoured wth salt and pepper, placed in a pie-dish with enough water to just cover it, covered, and stood in a warm oven for half an hour. This will ensure the meat keeping absolutely good. The onion should not be added until the meat is put into its suet crust.

The cabbages and other green vegetables will remain in good condition for days if placed on a stone floor in a dark corner of

the larder.

Keep back two ounces of chopped suet (when making the beefsteak pudding) for the suet dumplings to be cooked and eaten with the boiled silverside on Sunday.

THE CHRISTMAS LARDER

When making pastry for the mince pies make also some little cases in patty-pans, which can be filled with jam or cheesecake mixture and reheated when required. They will keep crisp and fresh if stored in air-

tight tins.

The hot blancmange is a splendid accompaniment to fried slices of plum pudding, for these are, in the natural order of things culinary, somewhat rich. The cornflour. which is rather thicker and eaten more in like proportions with the pudding than an ordinary sauce, helps to eke out the pudding and to render this course more wholesome for both young and older people.

Fresh eggs are expensive at this time of the year. A small handful of fine breadcrumbs and a little milk mixed with the beaten eggs before they are scrambled will make this dish more substantial and

economical.

When Monday arrives the housekeeper will have enjoyed quite a long rest from her usual catering duties, and she will probably find that she has enough food in the house to go on with for another two days. There still remain the pickings-and these are by no means inconsiderable-on the carcass of the turkey, and which, in a sauce made of the thickened flavoured liquor from the boiled bones of the bird will provide yet another turkey dish.

Then the silverside is in the larder, and if the weather is too cold to make this palatable it can be made into shepherd's pie, rissoles,

or curries.

A Word of Warning

When economy has to be closely studied. and a given sum of money must cover all expenses, it is advisable to buy the big necessities, such as the turkey, joint, and groceries, before falling victim to the temptingly displayed dessert, fruits, crackers, The alluring results of the confectioner's art are particularly enticing, and it is here that the young housekeeper is lured to destruction. Naturally, she thinks that the children would so love this or that, that "Christmas comes but once a year," and so on, but quite forgets that awful moment when, with an empty purse, she is reminded that some important purchase has yet to be made. Many a Christmas has been spoiled by the thought of the unpaid bills that will inevitably come flocking in with New Year's Day! This is dreadfully dull and depressing, I know, but, alas! it is advice proffered from dearly-bought experience.

Some Seasonable Recipes

An economical Christmas pudding, without eggs:

Required: 1 lb. currants, 1 lb. raisins (weighed after they are stoned), I teaspoonful powdered ginger, 1/2 lb. chopped suet, 1/2 lb. flour, 1 lb. breadcrumbs, a pinch of salt, 3 level teaspoonfuls of baking powder, 1 lb.

treacle or golden syrup.

Wash, dry, and pick the currants, and chop these and the raisins together. Chop the suet finely. Put the flour, breadcrumbs, salt and baking powder into a large basin, add the fruit and ginger, mix well, then pour in the treacle and stir with a wooden spoon till all the ingredients are thoroughly mixed. If the paste seems too dry add a little milk or water. Turn into greased basins, cover with buttered paper and a floured cloth, and steam for two or three hours. These quantities will make two large or four small puddings.

A sago Christmas pudding which is very light and digestible, excellent for invalids

and children:

Soak 6 tablespoonfuls of small sago in b pint of milk overnight; put I breakfastcupful of fine breadcrumbs into a basin with 3 tablespoonfuls of brown sugar, 3 oz. of stoned raisins, 2 oz. of finely shredded citron peel, and 1 teaspoonful of bicarbonate of soda. Add the soaked sago, and mix with I pint of warmed milk in which 1 oz. of fresh butter has been melted. Put into a greased basin, cover and steam for three hours. Serve with cornflour or custard sauce.

Mrs. St. Clair will be pleased to answer inquiries on matters dealt with in these pages. All communications, however, must be accompanied by a stamped envelope, and addressed "Mrs, St. Clair, QUIVER Office, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C."



Princess Juliana

From a photograph taken by Her Majesty the Queen of Helland.

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The little Tsarevitch in Christmas attire.

Photo : E. II. A

HOW THE ROYAL CHILDREN OF EUROPE KEEP CHRISTMAS

By SARAH A. TOOLEY

Illustrated by special photographs taken by their Majesties the Queens of Holland, Norway and Italy, and others.

THE glad season of the Christ-tide unites all the countries of Europe, except where the crescent has supplanted the cross, in a common celebration. The children of the royal houses, whether brought up in the Protestant, Roman Catholic, or Greek Church, rejoice in unison around the Christmas tree. It is the children's emblem of the festive season, and whatever distinctive national customs may be observed, the magic tree has come to hold a place in all the royal homes at Christmas.

Santa Claus, too, has an almost universal popularity. He is welcomed by the young Tsarevitch amidst the snows of Russia, by the Prince of Asturias in sunny Spain, and by the Princess Juliana in Holland, to whose country, indeed, the fleet-footed, heavily burdened old gentleman belongs. The Princess Juliana, if she were disposed to "set herself up," might say to the other little royalties of Europe, "See what you owe my country for discovering Santa Claus!"

In like manner little Prince Wilhelm of Prussia, the Kaiser's grandson, and heir presumptive, might make a bold claim for the Christmas tree and say, "We invented it in Germany." Prince Wilhelm may also claim, if he were disposed—but he is not a boastful boy—that at no Court in Europe is Christmas celebrated with such domestic charm and beauty as that of the Fatherland.

The celebration at the New Palace at Potsdam on Christmas Eve is a brilliant sight. The magnificent hall, in which the Kaiser holds his family gathering, looks like a lighted forest, for ranged on tables around the room are between twenty and thirty Christmas trees, varying in size from the large ones for the Kaiser and Kaiserin down to the tiny tree for the youngest grandchild. The trees scintillate with hundreds of lights reflected amongst the glittering stars and tinsel ornaments. Around each tree are placed the presents for the respective owner, also a plate of that toothsome delicacy of the season, the Pfefferkuchen (ginger cakes), without which no Christmas gathering in Germany, whether in palace or cottage, would be complete.

When the Marshal of the Palace has seen that all is in readiness, the roval family procession is formed. The Kaiser leads the gracious, eversmiling, motherly Kaiserin into the hall, and hitherto they have been accompanied on such occasions by their only daughter, the Princess Victoria Louise. This Christmas, however, if she visits Berlin she will be with her husband. Prince Ernest of Cumber-Then follow, in due order of precedence, the Crown Prince and Princess and their four children, and the Kaiser's other sons, and his daughters - in - law and grandchildren, even to the youngest baby in its nurse's arms.

The royal children look delightedly at the glittering trees, and are all anxiety to have their presents, but they are not allowed to forget that Christmas Eve is a holy time, beralding the birt's of Christ.

When all are assembled and the Kaiser and Kaiserin stand amongst their children and grandchildren, a delightful family group, the musicians strike the chords of that beautiful hymn of the Fatherland, "Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht," to be followed by other hymns, such as "Ihr Kinderlein kommet ihr her!" There is a deeply religious tone about the Kaiser's Christmas Eve gathering.

After the singing of the hymns the Kaiser leads the Kaiserm to her tree, and each member of the party goes to his or her tree to see the presents, and there is general congratulation and felicitation.

But for the little children there is something yet to follow. All eyes are turned to the door, for it is announced that Santa Claus has arrived, and the familiar old gentleman, bearded and holly-crowned, and stooping under the weight of his sack of presents, enters amidst hilarious greeting. He advances to the Kaiser to inquire anto the behaviour of the young princes



Royal Snow Men. Proto: E. N.
Princes Wilhelm and Louis
Ferdinand of Prussia.

and princesses during the year. Santa is usually quite satisfied with the report, or it may be that he has to express regret that Wilhelm gave trouble to his tutor, or that Louis Ferdinand had been disobedient; but on promise of good behaviour for the coming year Santa gives them presents with the rest of the children.

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Thus ends the Christmas Eve celebration for the royal children, and they go to bed to dream, doubtless, of glittering trees and Santa Claus, while the "grown-ups" repair to the great banqueting hall for dinner, The national dishes are served, consisting of blue carp boiled, venison and goose.

Christmas Day and the day following are times of fun and merriment at the palace, and if the season provides frost and snow the young princes have a merry time skating, sleighing, and tobogganing. Prince Wilhelm and Prince Louis Ferdinand, the elder sons of the Crown Prince, look very cosy in their white woollen suits knitted by the Crown Princess. In the photograph above they are dressed to look like snow men.

On the evenings of each of these days the family assemble again in the great hall, and the Christmas trees are lighted up. The trees are lighted for the fourth and last time on New Year's Eve, when the children have a high time of dancing, fun, and frolic. After dinner the Kaiser and Kaiserin, and the grown-up princes and princesses, together with the ladies and gentlemen of the Imperial Household, dance the old year out and the new year in.

Christmas, thus observed in the royal palace of the Fatherland, is typical of the celebration in the other Protestant Courts of Europe.

In Denmark the family gathering is not so patriarchal in character as when the late King Christian was living, and he and Queen Louise assembled their family around them.

HOW THE ROYAL CHILDREN OF EUROPE KEEP CHRISTMAS

The death of King Frederick so suddenly last year has cast a gloom about the Court. But the young King and Queen will doubtless revive the old gay times when the Knights' Hall at the Amalienborg Palace, Copenhagen, was the scene of a splendid festival on Christmas Eve. On such occasions an enormous tree, measuring some 20 feet, cut in the woods of Bernstorff, stood in the centre of the hall, decorated with silver chains and gilt cones and studded with stars.

On the top hovered an angel, and at the

foot sat Robin Goodfellow in an arbour of green branches. The presents for each member of the family were displayed on tables ranged around the apartment. The King and Queen, followed by children and grandchildren and the ladies and gentlemen of their household, in due order of precedence, came to inspect the tree, and the young people had a happy time over their presents.

This year the chief little people who will keep Christmas in the Knights' Hall at Amalienborg are Frederick the Crown Prince, aged 4, and his baby brother, and they are rich in uncles and aunts and young cousins.

In Norway Olaf reigns alone as Prince of the Christmastide. There are no other royal children to bear him company. But he is not at all dull, being by nature a very merry, bright little fellow. Then he has a double treat in winter, for he always comes with his parents to Appleton Hall, their Norfolk home, in time for "Granny's" birthday; last year his mother did not return as usual to Norway, owing to indisposition, and he spent Christmas with his cousins at Sandringham. He was very early at the "House" to wish Granny a Merry Christmas and offer his little gift. Then he passed a pleasant day with the King's younger children in good old English style.

When at home he has a very merry time

amongst the snow and ice. He skates, sleighs, toboggans, and skis in a most fearless manner. Queen Maud has taken snapshots of her little son when engaged in mastering the slippery arts of skating and skiing. One of his great treats at Christmas is to accompany his father to a ski-jumping contest. Then he returns to the palace grounds to try jumping on skis himself.

Prince Olaf's presents at Christmas are very numerous. He is such an attractive boy that everybody about the Court in Norway tries to give him a "good time." And his English and Danish relations and friends are equally solicitous. Queen Alexandra always selects a special kind of present for Olaf, and last year gave him a miniature motor-car, which he has learned to drive himself.

In the neighbouring kingdom of



The Future Kaiser and his Christmas Tree. Little Prince Wilhelm of Prussia and his aunt, the Duchess of Brunswick,

Sweden Christmas has come again to be a gay time at Court, for since the marriage of the Crown Prince to our Princess Margaret of Connaught it has grown to be a larger family festival, in which their charming children are a centre of attraction. The eldest sons, Prince Gustay and Prince Sigyard, are mas presents from their grandparents, the Duke and Duchess of Connaught, and from Aunt Patricia and Uncle Arthur. And the Christmas before last Prince Gustav-Adolf was rendered one of the happiest boys in Sweden by the arrival at the palace at Stockholm, on Christmas Eve, of a real live

horse, from his mother's cousin, our King George. He now rides it with great spirit.

All Swedish children are taught to be animal lovers, and it is the custom of the country for a sheaf of corn to be tied to a post outside the house to provide a Christmas dinner for the birds. The royal children know all about this pretty custom, and feed the birds in the palace grounds.

Ice carnivals are, too, a feature of the Swedish festival in Stockholm, and the two eldest sons of the Crown Prince are being taught ice sports. They make a pretty pair, to-bogganing, as our illustration shows. Their cousins, the young daughters of Prince Carl of Sweden, also enjoy all kinds of winter sports, and dress in typical Swedish winter costume when they go sleighing and ski-ing.

At the ducal court of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha there are three small children to keep Christmas. They are Prince Johann Leopold, Princess Sibylle, and Prince Dietmar, the family of the reigning Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha, whom we remember so well in this country as the young Duke of Albany, before he accepted the throne of Saxe-Coburg. His wife was the Princess Victoria of Holstein-Glucksburg, so they give

their children a blend of the English and German Christmas—a very good blend indeed. It is charming to see the young Duke and Duchess enjoying the season with their little children, and in a measure it recalls the days when the "little Duke of Albany" and his sister, Princess Alice, had such happy Christmases at Claremont. Snow sports have



A Future King Tobogganing.

Photo: E. N. A.

Prince Gustav-Adolf and Prince Signard of Sweden.

of an age to appreciate the delights of a Christmas tree and a visit from Santa Claus. Their sister, Princess Ingrid Victoria, is a little fairy of tiree, only just beginning to be initiated into the festive rites; and the youngest of the Lamily is Bertil, Duke of Halland, aged nearly two years.

These little people get numerous Christ-

HOW THE ROYAL CHILDREN OF EUROPE KEEP CHRISTMAS

already begun to engage the attention of Prince Johann, the little hereditary Duke, and he is very proud indeed of being allowed to ski. Prince Olaf of Norway must look to his laurels.

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In Holland the Princess Juliana is queen of the palace festival, and she keeps it much as her mother did when she was the "voung hope" of Holland. The season is generally spent at the palace in Amsterdam. But much of the season's merrymaking has already been expended on December 6th, the day of St. Nicholas, the children's saint in Holland. Already the Princess Juliana understands that if she is very good indeed. St. Nicholas will come on his white horse to the palace and will enter without ceremony, down the chimney. He has, like Santa Claus, whose prototype he is, to distribute so many presents that he

cannot consider etiquette even when visiting the palace: so down the chimney he comes and puts his gifts in the waiting shoes of the Princess Juliana.

St. Nicholas is attended by a black boy, a very disagreeable person who has been lurking about the chimneys all the year round to report on naughty children. If they do not reform before St. Nicholas Day



" Olaf goes Ski-ing."

the Queen of Norway.

they get a birch rod in their shoe instead of a present. Such a thing has, of course, never happened at the palace. The Princess Iuliana is the best of children, so her devoted mother thinks.

The Princess Juliana is one of the most fortunate of young royalties, for not only does she get her surprise presents on St. Nicholas Day, but she has more presents

and more merrymaking at Christmas. The Queen of Holland keeps the festival at the palace much in the German style. On Holy Eve, Christmas trees and tables of presents are arranged for the Court circle, and Princess Iuliana has a lovely tree all to her-Trees are also provided for her little friends in the palace. Next day she has a Christmas party, and the trees are again lighted up.

In Russia the Imperial family keep Christmas at Tsarkoe Selo, the beautiful



A Christmas Present from King George. Sweden's future king mounted on a pony given him by his cousin, King George V., the Christmas before last,

Photo : E. N. A.

palace some twenty miles from St. Petersburg, where the Tsar and Tsarina live a secluded and domestic life, with their five children around them. Christmas is not observed as a holiday in Russia by the mass of the people, the Greek Church making Easter its great annual festival. But the Tsar has inherited from his Danish mother, Queen Alexandra's sister, a love of the Scandinavian style, so nearly allied to the Anglo-German form of celebration in which the Tsarina was brought up. Consequently

loves to get surprise presents at Christmas. His sisters, the four young Grand Duchesses, Olga, Tatiana, Marie, and Anastasia, devote themselves very specially to giving Alexis "a good time." He is a delicate boy, excitable and highly strung, and not strong enough to join in the more active sports proper to the season in Russia. But he finds great delight in being driven in his sleigh about the grounds of the

of Russia" is provided with everything

which a small boy could desire to have, he

palace and watching his sisters skating and engaging in other winter sports. Alexis is always attended by his faithful Cossack, a fine, stalwart man who has watched over him from infancy and still carries him when the doctors do not wish

him to walk,

But we must leave the royal children of Russia, and proceed to sunnier lands where Christmas is celebrated with all the pomp and circumstance of Romanism, and in a climate that robs the season of the wintry setting which we in more northern climes associate with old Father Christmas.

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In Spain there are little people in whom we in this country take a special interest, since King Alfonso found his fair bride, Princess Ena of Battenberg, in England. Queen Victoria of Spain has now five children—the Prince of Asturias, the Infante Don Jaime, the Infanta Beatrice, the Infanta Maria Christina, and the new baby, a son. The eldest of the group is only six years old, but he and his brother are quite old enough to understand the significance of Christmas and the magic tree. They have an after-

noon party on Christmas Day and enjoy the time-honoured festivities with their young friends, children of Spanish grandees. There is much giving and receiving of presents, and the little folks at the palace enjoy their mazapán, an almond paste, sold in huge quantities in Madrid at this season, just as much as the children in the streets.

Juvenile tableaux vivants are often arranged at Christmas for the amusement of the Spanish Court, and the elder royal children take part in them. One year the Prince of



Christmas in Madrid.

Photo: F. N. A.

The Spanish princes posing in juvenile tableaux vivauts,

the Imperial couple have always observed Christmas as a private family festival, and provide a Christmas tree for their children.

Many and costly presents come to Tsarkoe Selo for the Imperial family from their relations in this country and in Denmark. The special couriers who bring them are veritable Santa Clauses, travelling in tinkling sleighs over the snow roads from St. Petersburg to the country palace. Their advent is a great excitement to the young Tsarevitch Alexis, for, although the "hope

HOW THE ROYAL CHILDREN OF EUROPE KEEP CHRISTMAS



How the Heir to the Throne of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha spends Christmas,

Asturias and the Infante Don Jaime were dressed in military uniform to form a tableau entitled "Spain's Military Forces," and a quaint little picture they made in their smart coats and gilt buttons.

The royal family of Italy keep Christ-

mas in Rome with great religious form and ceremony; but to the children it is just a gay, happy time, celebrated with a Christmas tree as in other countries. The Christmas tree is not, however, at all general in Italy. A part of the holidays is sometimes passed by the royal children-the Princesses Yolanda, Mafalda, and Giovanna, with their young brother, the Prince of Piedmont - at the castle in Piedmont, where they enjoy a delightful outdoor life, as may be judged from our illustration. Very merry squirrels they look, indeed, on the branch of the old tree. The Princess Yolanda was a great favourite with King Edward, who took her some lovely toys when he and Queen Alexandra visited the Italian Court.

Everybody in Italy seems to lay themselves out for the entertainment of the little ones, and *Natale* is a grand time for the boys and girls, whether in cottage or palace. Queen Elena is a most devoted mother, and very merry herself, so the royal children do not lack entertainment.

In addition to the Christmas tree they have a *Bambino*, a representation of the Christ child lying in the manger. All through the country districts of Italy the poorest family will have a *Bambino* set up in a secluded corner

of the living-room to be illuminated at Christmas. At the palace it is a beautiful and elaborate model. The children are taught that the "All Good" sends them presents at Christmas because of the Bambino—a very beautiful idea.



Royal Squirrels. Children of the King of Italy on holiday,

From a photo by H.M. the Queen of Italy.



JOHN GAYNOR'S DREAM

A Christmas Story

By DAVID LYALL

OHN GAYNOR awoke in the grey dawn with a curious sense of oppression weighing him down like a heavy load. So vivid and real had been the dream that it was hard, wellnigh impossible, for the moment to realise that it was only a dream. He rose on his elbow, reached to the small table which stood close by his bed, and struck a match to light the candle. It threw a small weird light over the sloping roof of his little shack bedroom, revealing all its bareness and discomfort. A single bedstead, a dressing chest, and a few pegs behind the door to hang things on, practically completed its furnishing; a strip of cheap gaudy carpet before the bed was the only floor covering; there was not even a bit of oilcloth across the rough boards.

It was half-past seven o'clock and a November morning, too dark out of doors for work yet, and no live thing stirring about the place. Not even a cock crowed, because there were none to crow; two lonely men batching together in the wilderness have no time to attend to poultry. Their struggle with Nature on the land usually suffices to

engage all their powers.

Gaynor listened a moment. The hired man, who usually got up first and saw to the stove's fresh kindling, supposing that it happened to be out, was evidently not yet astir. But the stove was not out. Gaynor knew by the fact that his room was warm. A hideous black stove-pipe which reached from the kitchen right through his bedroom, and was lost on the roof, kept him from actually freezing in his bed in the bitter winters of Saskatoon. But it was hardly winter yet-not so much as a flake of snow had fallen; nothing but rain, and a kind of wet white mist, rare in these parts, had added to the gloom of the closing year. Gaynor, a sane, evenly-balanced man, invariably got deadly sick of his existence in November, After the white desolation descended on the plains, and the winter sun shone bravely, he seemed to settle down.

He was sick of the muggy gloom, and the

wet which made the roads twice as impassable as the snow, and rendered the fields untit for the plough.

He lay down, and his dream passed before him once more with extraordinary vividness. It had been a dream of England, of a house that was dear to him, of people that somehow suddenly and acutely needed his help.

He had even imagined (or heard—he inclined to the latter, though he was not a superstitious man) that he had heard his own name, "John! John!" called in poignant accents. And his impulse, undoubtedly, as he lay there in the grey stillness, was to arise and go. He had put it off for another year through motives of economy, and because he wanted to do the return comfortably and leave nothing to chance. But his dream had shaken him.

Presently he heard a movement in the adjoining room, and the swift patter of Harold's stockinged feet on the creaking stairs. Then the stove being raked and stoked, to the accompaniment of a cheery whistle. Blessed in his hired man, who had been with him for over eighteen months, Gaynor's experiment "at the back of beyond," as he called it, seemed likely to succeed. But, as has been said, he was a cautious man, who spared himself not at all, and left nothing to chance.

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He rose then, and dressed in the careless fashion common to men living alone. He took no bath, though once he had belonged to the brigade of Englishmen who regard the morning tub as something like a sacrament. But when there is nothing to bathe in but a small tin basin, the habit is inclined to relax. In the summer, and right up till the first nip came in the air, he plunged into the creek at the bottom of the yard, though it had weird specimens of live creatures in it, including small snakes which would shoot up their heads and regard the big intruder on their private waters curiously. But Gaynor had proved them harmless, though he never got over the slight feeling of nausea the sight of them caused.

JOHN GAYNOR'S DREAM

Harold was beginning to sizzle the bacon whenhegotdownstairs, and the place was warm and comfortable and astonishingly clean.

"Mornin', boss," said Harold, a broadfaced Yorkshine lad, who liked his boss uncommonly well and wrote home glowing accounts of him to his people under the shadow of old Beverley Minster.

"Morning, Harold; rain again. Gets a bit sickening, dcesn't it? A good stiff blizzard is what we want."

"It's a-coomin'," observed Harold cheer-

fully, as he turned with considerable skill the thick slice of bacon in the pan.

"Been to the stable?" asked Gaynor.

"Yes, they're all right. Sit down, boss, and hev a bit comfort. There ain't none outside."

Gaynor went to the scullery to wash his face and hands, after which he felt better. When they sat down to eat, he looked at Harold once or twice half furtively, half inquiringly.

Presently he spoke.

"Say, Harold, I'm off to the Old Country Saturday, if you'll stop and boss the show till I get back."

"The Old Country!" repeated Harold, with his mouth full, "What for?"

"I've got to go; I can't explain, and now's the time. Let me see—this is the twenty-seventh of November. I'll get there in plenty of time for Christmas, and would be back

before the end of January. You can just go on with the plough, and, when it freezes up, start to haul out the wheat—that is, if you are willing to stop."

"Don't mind, boss," said Harold calmly,
"That's inside of two months you'd be
away?"

Gaynor nodded.

"Know anything about the boats?" Harold asked presently.

"Nothing. I must just go East and take my chance; New York for preference. The



"'Mornin', boss,' said Harold,
a broad-faced Yorkshire lad."

Drawn by Dudley Tennant

Atlantic's no treat in the dead of winter; the quickest is what'll suit me."

In the course of the day Gaynor rode into the nearest town—which was thirteen miles off—to settle up various items of business, and call at the bank to find out just how he stood. His inquiries were satisfactory, and forty-eight hours later he shook hands with Harold at the little crude railway depot at which the Limited Express stopped when there was anybody to pick up, and started out for home.

He had various delays, and in the end had to be content with a second-class slow-going boat; but the voyage was uneventful, the ocean astonishingly smooth, and he landed in Liverpool on the fifteenth of December, just ten days before Christmas. He had left weeping skies in Saskatoon; he returned to them at Liverpool, which looked its very dreariest at eight o'clock in the morning, which was the uncomfortable hour chosen to disembark the passengers. In London at four o'clock in the same afternoon Gaynor found better conditions: bright skies, a touch of frost in the air, gay, brilliantly fit shops, and crowds everywhere of eager shoppers jostling each other good-naturedly.

It seemed to Gaynor that during the five years of his absence the population of London must have increased enormously. There could not possibly be room for them all. He caught himself wondering in what over-crowded areas they lived, moved, and had their beings. Since every unit might very naturally be supposed to represent a family, where were all these families housed, clothed, and slept? But he liked it; the verve and stir of it got into his blood, and he felt forced to the conclusion that the man who voluntarily turns his back on his native land does so at immense sacrifice, which he only gauges after he has made it.

Gaynor had plenty of money in his pocket, and from the comfortable shelter of the Langham Hotel he went forth to provide himself with some decent clothing and certain other things the well-brought-up Englishman has been taught to consider indispensable. On each of the two nights he was in town he went to a theatre, and enjoyed it as a child enjoye its first pantomine. Yet he could recall nights when performances quite as good had bored him to the verge of tears.

Then it came to Saturday; to-morrow

would be the last Sunday before Christmas, a day on which all homing birds begin to plume their wings for the homeward flight. He thought he had better go down to the little quiet country village which was engraven on his heart in letters of gold, and yet he was quite conscious of a strange reluctance. He pottered about London all the morning, bought more things, gifts for this one and that; and finally, after lunch, drove in a taxi—in which he took as much joy as any child—to the Great Central station, to catch the Verney Junction train.

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A quick run of little more than an hour brought him to his destination, which was Great Missenden, where he alighted with an odd, shy shrinking from recognition. But five years is a long time, even at a country station; and perhaps John himself had changed. Anyhow, he was not worried with recognition; even the fly drivers failed to touch their hats to him, except in the casual way bestowed on chance fares.

After a moment's hesitation, Gaynor decided to walk. Stepping up to a porter, he indicated his modest luggage.

"I can leave that, I suppose, for an hour or two, and send for it if I am to stop the night? I'm going on to Arnden Manor."

"Yes, sir," said the man, touching his hat; and Gayner imagined that an odd expression crossed his face.

"You know the Manor, my lad?"

"Oh, yes, sir; it's a goodish walk—a matter o' two mile, at least. W'y not the bus or a fly?"

"I want to walk. You'll take care of my stuff?"

"Yes, sir. Rare lot o' trouble they be in up there, sir," volunteered the lad rather sympathetically.

"Are they? I am sorry to hear that. I've come from abroad. What kind of trouble?"

"I hardly knows, sir. It's summat to do wive the place. Somebody has come abart claimin' it, like, from the ladies; and they do say it's to go to law, and even if they hold on it'll clean them out. It's only what they dew say, sir. I donno now ef it's all true; but they are in trouble—you can see it on their faces."

Gaynor's pulses quickened and his feet became impatient. He thanked the lad, gave him a sixpence, and stalked through the little booking office down the familiar winding way to the village street, and then essayed to climb to the spur of the hill where the eld manor-house stood in its sheltering trees, with a magnificent view of the vale of Aylesbury spread in front like a panorama. He had not forgotten the spot where the path turned and wound, so that a quarter of a mile was cut off; he plunged into it and walked on with that strange tingling of the senses which belongs to moments of rare emotion. It was a perfect winter day. A slight sprinkling of snow on the hard ground covered up its bareness, and sparkled on the branches of the trees, giving them a touch of rare beauty. The red sunset, nowhere seen to better advantage than from that rising path, lent glory to the scene, which to Gaynor was both familiar and beloved. It at least had not changed in one single particular, though just here and there he saw a new house standing out rather aggressively on the landscape, indicating the fact that discerning builders had found

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one more of the delectable bits within accessible distance of London.

But right up on the spur, in the deep shadow of the darkling pines, was solitude supreme. He paused at the little wicket, which gave entrance to the private demesne of Arnden, for his emotion was quite real, and a little overmastering. Then, being wholly unexpected, he had to arrange the manner of his arrival, and decide whether it would not alarm the ladies it was intended to reassure and to help.

But presently the difficulty was solved. There was a short, sharp bark, and a white fox terrier came crashing through the brushwood barking furiously. When he got right near to Gaynor his bark changed to a fierce yelp of delight, and he simply leaped all over him.



"She seemed to sway a little, and would have fallen had not Gaynor sprung to her side."

Drawn by Dudley Tennant.

"Steady, Rick, old chappie—steady, steady," said Gaynor in a warning whisper, though the beast's joy and remembrance warmed his heart.

A minute more, and Rick's mistress was a witness to the scene. A tall, slight, pale woman, about thirty, with a sweet but overanxious face, had hurried after her dog, lest he should be hurting some live thing or perhaps holding some trespasser at bay. When she saw what had actually happened she seemed to sway a little, and would have fallen, perhaps, had not Gaynor sprung to her side.

"Mary—why, Mary, don't look so scared; it's only John Gaynor, after all! Poor old John—nothing to be afraid of. Steady, old woman."

She was trembling so that he had to put his arm round her, and the touch gave him

an undoubted thrill.

"Oh, John, how did you know we wanted you so dreadfully?" she said at last, her face crimsoning a little as she drew herself away as if ashamed of her momentary betraval.

"Faith, I don't know; I knew it, and here I am. But, good heavens, what have they been doing to you? They've robbed

you of your youth,'

"Oh, that went when you went, John," she very nearly said, but did not,

"It's worry, John. Don't let us go in just yet: I have heaps to tell you. Let us walk up and down. That ridiculous Rick won't let you alone."

"He, at least, is faithful," said Gaynor with a slight touch of irony. "And bears no malice. How's your mother?"

"Very poorly. She never has been right since father died; and, of course, we were left badly off, and all this trouble has happened since."

"What trouble? Remember, I know nothing. I put a few questions to a chap at the station as to whether I should find you here still, don't you know, because five years is a good slice out of a man's life, and I wanted to be a little bit sure of my ground."

" What did he tell you?"

"Said there was some trouble about the

place-somebody claiming it."

" Have they got as far as that?" she said with a faint, troubled sigh. "Well, I suppose there is truth in it after all, because Arnden really belongs now to Gilbert Rede -he has such a heavy mortgage on it,"

Gaynor set his lips. It was Gilbert Rede who had driven him out of England, who had supplanted him with Mary Transome,

" It's not easy for me to speak about your cousin Gilbert and keep a civil tongue in my head. This, then, was at the bottom of all his overbearing insolence in the past. He really had your father in his power."

" Completely; and all the year that has passed since his death he has been worrying us. Finally, about three weeks ago, he

wrote me an ultimatum."

"Aye; what was that?"

" He said either I must marry him or he would foreclose, and we should have to leave Arnden. He pointed out that he had showed a great deal of consideration both to father and to us, and had got nothing for it, and that his patience had come to an end."

"Yes, and what sort of answer did you make to that?"

" I asked for a month to consider. The month is up to-morrow."

" And what else did you do besides?" " I wrote a letter to you, John, but I never had the courage to post it. It lies in my desk still."

Gaynor was silent a moment, thinking queerly.

" Could you by any chance recall the date when you wrote that letter?"

"Oh, yes-easily. It was very late at night on the very day I heard from Gilbert. It was the twenty-sixth of November. Why do you ask?"

" I'll tell you by and by. So Rede comes for his answer to-morrow, does he? And

what is it going to be?"

"I don't know, John. To leave Arnden will kill mother. She thinks not so badly of Gilbert. She is so frail, poor old dear; she has lost her power of discrimination, and forgets that it is I who will have to live with Gilbert. It is peace to live and die in Arnden, she wants, and is not too particular about how it is accomplished. Old people are like children, John; they lose their sense of proportion."

"I see. And the month is up to-morrow, you say?"

"Yes, by the day of the week; and I heard from Gilbert this morning that he will arrive to-morrow afternoon,"

" I see."

An extraordinary exhilaration of spirit seemed to possess Gaynor all at once. He threw his head up, and seemed to draw a long breath,

Mary Transome looked at him in a little wonder, not unmixed with admiration.

"Well, don't trouble your head about Gilbert Rede, dear woman. I'll deal with him to-morrow."

"Will you, John? Oh, thank you!"

The glance from her fine, soft, grey eyes was as trustful as a child's. She did not so much as ask how he was going to do it. Her manner touched him so much, that he had to put on a brake to keep back certain words which might be premature.

" And how have you been getting on, dear John?" she said shyly. "I have so often

wished to hear from you."



"Whatever he says is true,' she repeated calmly, 'and I trust him absolutely'"—p. 223.

Deaun by Dudley Tenmant.

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ot it. he in "A man can't know these things unless some message is sent him," he answered rather grimly. "Pm doing well. The thing is paying—has paid beyond all my expectations. That's what happens to the man who has nothing at stake, and who doesn't care."

"Don't speak so bitterly, dear John," she said; and again she seemed to shed the greater part of her thirty years and to be

course, everybody expected you to succeed."
"I happened on a bit of particular good luck. I found an oil well on my land. I've made a deal with the Standard Oil Company, and it's going to make me a rich man."

a child again in her outlook. "But, of

"Oh, how splendid!"

"I'm glad you think so, Personally, I don't mind much. I was very happy in the shack, and I liked working on the land. I shall never have anything to do with the oil myself, except shovel in the shekels. Frenzied finance doesn't appeal to me. I'll probably sell out and come home. Now take me to your mother. And can you put me up, or shall I go to the inn?"

Her glance was sufficient, and that night Gaynor slept under the same roof with the woman he loved, and felt that he had come

home.

After the rough conditions in the shack at the back of beyond, the ordered luxury and quiet comfort of the old English manorhouse mightily appealed to John Gaynor, It was all very, very simple-even meagre, for money was now very scarce in the manorhouse of Arnden; but the pretty dinnertable, decorated with wild berries and Christmas roses, the sweet, frail, old lady in her soft black gown and white widow's cap. and Mary in white, wholly unrelieved, made a picture for Gaynor which never afterwards faded from his remembrance, He found Mrs. Transome much changed; and it was with some difficulty she was made to understand who he was, and how he had arrived a guest in the house. It filled him with an immense compassion for Mary, who had been so terribly alone all these years. Next morning, as they walked together all over the stables and outhouses. John making a sort of inventory of the place, as it were, he said quite quietly;

"You won't see Rede this afternoon, Mary."

"I shall be very, very thankful not to. I

am leaving everything to you, John. It is what I have needed and missed so mucha big, kind brother to manage the business part of our lives. You see, father never told us anything. I know now that I have grown up in a state of culpable ignorance."

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Gaynor undoubtedly winced at the use of the word "brother," but he permitted it to

pass

"I'll straighten out Rede, I promise you, provided I have a free hand. I'll go into the business with him thoroughly, and find out exactly how you stand in relation to him; then we shall know where we are so to speak."

"Yes, John."

"It's a nice place, this, Mary. How many farms? Is there enough to occupy a man's time, supposing there was a man in possesion?"

"There are five farms. When I was a little girl father used to keep the home fam in his own hands, and it paid well then. I have often heard him say it. But somehow, since Gilbert has been managing for a nothing, according to him, ever pays."

"Well, I know a little about land values and the price of stocks and grain now, Mary, so it is quite possible that Rede and I may have a lively interview."

It was much shorter than Mary expected About three o'clock that afternoon she beheld her cousin arrive in the dogcart from the "Dragon," and then a silence fell on the house that seemed both gloomy and impressive. Her mother was asleep in her room, and Mary paced to and fro at the top of the gallery staircase watching and waiting for the opening of the library door. Finally she heard it, and John came out.

"Yes, John, I'm here," she called out breathlessly; and the next minute he was

half-way up the stairs.

"You'll have to come down, Mary. Rede won't go without seeing you, and having his answer from your own lips."

"Oh, John, can't you persuade him to go?"

"No, I can't. Look here, Mary; you" have to stand by me right through; be surprised at nothing. If there's anything you don't understand, we'll sort it out

"Very well, John," she answered, and became aware that Gaynor was labouring under considerable personal feeling.

IOHN GAYNOR'S DREAM

"I've taken a good deal on myself, dear woman," he said as they neared the library door. "But you promise not to go back on me—to agree to everything. In the meantime, it's the only way."

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"I agree, of course. You are the only hope I have in the world."

They passed into the room where Rede, a threatening figure, his handsome face a little fiery, his eyes full of gloom and anger, was waiting for them.

"Good afternoon, Gilbert," said Mary briefly, and somehow, at the moment, every vestige of her nervousness seemed to leave her, and she felt a sensation of extraordinary strength and calm enveloping her.

"Afternoon," he answered briefly. "Is what Gaynor says true, Mary?"

"Whatever he says is true," she repeated calmly, "and I trust him absolutely."

"And you will throw me over for this adventurer? Marry a man who left England under a cloud?" he said hoarsely.

She started ever so slightly, but her answer did not fail.

"Yes," she said quite steadily, "I will.

I place myself unreservedly, and all my affairs, in Mr. Gaynor's hands."

"Well, you're likely to get left," he said with a sneer. "I'd like to see this precious money he talks about. I'll go; but if my claim is not settled to the uttermost farthing by Monday, I'll know the reason why-that's all."

Now in a towering passion, he strode out of the room, balked desire and ambitien glaring from his angry eyes. Gaynor followed him to the door, had a final word with him there, and then slowly, very slowly, walked back to the library. He had made a desperate bid for happiness, and she had stood by him loyally; but even yet he was by no means sure.

When he reached the door she was standing, looking expectantly towards it, with a little tremulous but quite lovely smile on her lips.

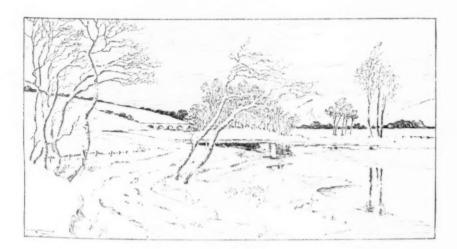
And the next moment her head was on his breast.

"I want to tell you that I got that message, darling," he said after a while, "I woke up in the middle of the night, quite certain I heard you call me. Did you call me that night?"

"Oh, I did!" she said, hiding her face.

"After I had written the letter and felt I couldn't post it, I just laid my head down on the table, and cried out, 'Oh, John, John!"

"I heard it. Queer, isn't it? But all in keeping with the season. Please God, we'll have a jolly English Christmas, and as soon as it's over we'll get married and this will be our home."



PEACE HATH HER VICTORIES

A Gold Medal for Heroes

By THE EDITOR

THE publication of the series of articles, "Peace hath her Victories," in our last volume has once more called attention to the bravery and daring of heroes in our midst. When human life has been in peril, and where human resource and courage can show any means of rescue, brave men of all classes and conditions have been found to come forward and risk their own lives to save others.

Do we sufficiently recognise our heroes? True, no reward we can afterwards offer can compare with the life that a man has willingly placed in jeopardy, and the thought of reward has not been the motive that has inspired these men to dare and to accomplish. But at the same time it is well for not only those concerned, but for mankind at large, that we offer our formal tribute to bravery and daring, that we set the seal of our approval and admiration on the gallantry that seeks not to destroy life but to save.

" Quiver " Medals

THE QUIVER has always been foremost in the desire to recognise courage in life-saving, and some twenty or thirty years ago there existed a regular system of awarding QUIVER Medals for gallant conduct in saving life.

The race of heroes did not die out with the nineteenth century, and, with deeds of heroism being reported in our newpapers almost daily, there is no reason why THE QUIVER Award for Heroes should not be revived.

I have much pleasure in informing readers that funds have been placed in the hands of Trustees out of the interest on which Medals of Honour are each year to be awarded in recognition of the most heroic conduct in the saving of life in peril on land or sea.

In order that this scheme may be fairly and successfully carried out I invite the co-operation of readers.

A Gold Medal of Honour will be awarded the man or woman judged to have shown the most heroic conduct in the saving of life during the year ending June 30, 1014 (that is from July 1 of this present year to the middle of next).

Should there be, in the opinion of the Trustees, no one case clearly entitled to the Gold Medal, they may award one or more Silver Medals, or they may award such Silver Medals in addition to the Gold one, at their discretion.

In any case the decision of the Trustees shall be final.

Prize of Three Guineas

In order to help interest in the matter I shall, in addition, be pleased to award a prize of Three Guineas to the reader who sends the best authenticated account of the incident which gains a Gold or Silver Medal.

In awarding the prize I shall consider not so much the literary style of the narrative of my informant as the actual, properly authenticated facts that he presents, and which shall enable the Trustees to make their award.

These accounts may be sent in at any time from now until July 31, 1914, and in awarding this money prize the Editor's decision shall be final.

All communications must be addressed to The Editor, The Quiver, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C., and marked "Quiver Heroes Fund."

The Trustees of the Fund are Sir Malcolm Morris, K.C.V.O., Mr. W. A. Posnett, and Mr. Arthur Spurgeon, J.P.





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WE shall do so much in the years to come,
But what have we done to-day?
We shall give our gold in a princely sum,
But what did we give to-day?
We shall lift the heart and dry the tear,
We shall plant a hope in the place of fear,
We shall speak the words of love and cheer;
But what did we speak to-day?

We shall be so kind in the after while,
But what have we been to-day?
We shall bring to each lonely life a smile,
But what have we brought to-day?
We shall give to truth a grander birth,
And to steadfast faith a deeper worth,
We shall feed the hungering souls of earth;
But whom have we fed to-day?

We shall reap such joys in the by and by,
But what have we sown to-day?
We shall build us mansions in the sky,
But what have we built to-day?
'Tis sweet in idle dreams to bask,
But here and now do we our task?
Yes, this is the thing our souls must ask,
"What have we done to-day?"

NIXON WATERMAN.



The Trivial Round

ONE of the chief dangers of life is trusting occasions. We think that conspicuous events, striking experiences, exalted moments have most to do with our character and capacity. We are wrong. Common days, monotonous hours, wearisome paths, plain old tools, and everyday clothes tell

the real story. Good habits are not made on birthdays, nor Christian character at the new year. The vision may dawn, the dream may waken, the heart may leap with a new inspiration on some mountain-top, but the test, the triumph, is at the foot of the mountain on the level plain. The uneventful and commonplace hour is where the battle is won or lost.—Malthe D. Babcock.



Recipe for Good Manners

COMBINE much good sense with some good nature and a little self-denial for the sake of others.

It is the perception of the fine line which separates dignity from ceremoniousness, gentility from affectation, refinement from effeminacy.

It is the art of being familiar without being vulgar, of being frank without being indiscreet, of being reserved without being mysterious.

It is the tact which knows the proper time and place for all that is to be said or done, and the faculty of both acting and speaking with an air of distinction. A compound of all the agreeable qualities in which none predominates to the exclusion of the rest.—LORD CHESTERFIELD.



The Greatness of Trifles

OUR lives are like the Cornish rockingstones, pivoted on little points. Things apparently most insignificant have a knack of suddenly developing unexpected consequences, and turning out to be, not small things at all, but great, decisive, and fruitful. The most part of every life is made up of trifles, and unless these are ruled by the highest motives, life, which is divided into grains like the sand, will have gone by while we are preparing for the big events which we think worthy of being regulated by lofty principles.—Alex, Maclaren.

Faith

ALL who have done great things for men have been the most hopeful sons of the church militant. As the brave man by his courage makes all around him courageous, swallowing up their doubts and fears in the greatness of his heart, not because he does not see the danger, but because he sees through and beyond it—so the man who has kept his eves clear to discern the possibilities of good in others, is able by the attraction of his confidence to overcome and expel from their breasts the grudging, doubtful, and suspicious spirit which keeps them weak and divided because it keeps them at their lowest.—Edw, Caird.

The Word



Joy:
The joy of life;
The joy of children and of wife;
The joy of bright blue skies;
The joy of rain; the glad surprise
Of tainkling stars that skine at night;
The joy of winged things upon their flight,
The joy of noonday, and the tried
True joyousness of eventide;
The joy of labour, and of mirth;

The joy of air and sea and earth
The countless joys that ever flow from Him
Whose vast beneficence doth dim
The lustrous light of day,
And lavish gifts upon our way.

Whate'er there be of Sorrow,
I'll put off fill To-morrow,
And when To-morrow comes; why, then,

And when to-morrow comes; why, then, Twill be To-day and Joy again! John Kendrick Bangs.

90

The Contagion of Good Cheer

HAVE you ever noticed how wonderfully contagions is the spirit of good cheer? One bright, hopeful spirit in the household, the office, or the store, will keep everyone in good humour, brooved up by the very power of its optimistic personality.

Someone has expressed the wish that good health might be as "catching" as disease. Certain it is that cheerfulness is quite as contagious as the "blues," provided that it proceeds from the heart and is thoroughly sincere.

"It is a fine morning, is it not?" called a cheery individual as he passed a man wearing a gloomy countenance

wearing a gloomy countenance.

"Why, so it is!" he replied; "I hadn't thought of it before." And with his shoulders thrown back and a new buoyancy in his step he went on his way, the frown clearing from his face as the consciousness that it was a fine day penetrated his soul.

"It's a fine morning, is it not?" the cheery individual repeated to the man in the shop where he stopped to do an errand.

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The man turned a sad face to his customer.
"The weather has been bad for my asthms of late," he said, "but I think I do fel better this morning." He smiled as he handed the package over the counter.

"It's a fine morning, is it not?" continued the cheery individual as he paused to speak to the crippled street-seller at the corner.

"Yes, it is a fine day," he replied, "although I hadn't thought of it before. I do believe trade will pick up with this kind of weather."

"A cheerful heart maketh a glad countenance," said Solomon. And from Solomon's time to this it has been equally true that a cheerful heart is reflected not only in one's own countenance, but in that of one's neighbour as well.—ORIN EDSON CROOKER.

96

The Sway of Love

DANTE, describing the effect upon him of his first sight of Beatrice, when both were but in their ninth year, says: "At that moment I say most truly that the spirit of life, which hath its dwelling in the secretest chamber of the heart, began to tremble so violently that the least pulses of my body shook therewith, and in trembling it said these words: "Behold a god stronger than I who, coming, shall rule me."

The Sacredness of Personality

I WOULD rather be what God chose to make me than the most glorious creature I could think of. To have been thought about, born in God's thoughts and then made by God, is the dearest, grandest, most precious thing in all thinking.—GEORGE MAY DONALD.

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THE BEAUTY MAKER

By MARY BRADFORD WHITING

CHAPTER I

IRMA AND URSULA

THROUGH the long, hot hours of the afternoon Irma Wyndham had lain back in her chair under the cedar tree the lawn, her golden head resting against its cushions, her slender white fingers tracing a few lines now and again on the sketching block on her knee, and then letting the pencil fall as though the exertion was beyond her strength.

It was a fair and fragrant garden in which she sat, even though it was the limited garden of a town; its walls were covered with creepers, its beds were bright with flowers, at its far end stood the fine old cedar tree from which the house took its name, and on its southern side the spires and towers of Oldchester Cathedral soared up in all their splendour against the blue September sky.

Irma had lived in that house since the days of her childhood; she could, in fact. remember no other home, for her father had died when she was six years old, and her recollections of the Indian station in which her earliest days had been spent were soon blotted out by her new surroundings. Captain Wyndham had lost his life in one of the small frontier wars which can bring sorrow and bereavement as surely as a great conflict in which thousands of troops are engaged; his wife, still hardly more than a girl, knew that the bullet that had killed him had pierced her own heart also, and, taking her little child with her, she went back to the one relative she had in the world, the aunt who had brought her up, and who had been more to her than many mothers are to their children.

Miss Yorke received her with open arms, She took the little golden-haired Irma to her heart at once, she nursed her niece through the long illness that followed her return, she laid the broken heart to rest under the churchyard daisies, and devoted herself to the wan-faced little baby left to her care.

But though Miss Yorke did her best for the baby, she could never feel the love for it that she felt for its elder sister; it would have been far better if it had not comethat was the thought at the back of her mind, and, carefully hidden as it was, it shadowed the little Ursula's childhood and gave a wistful look to her eyes that they had never lost. For Ursula did grow up-frail and wizened as she was-and she not only grew up but flourished, thanks to the sensible treatment of her aunt and the fresh, sweet air of Oldchester; her muscles strengthened, and the colour came into her cheeks, and as the two sisters passed out of childhood it was Irma who was languid and delicate, while Ursula developed a power of industry and application that seemed absolutely untiring. There was a good school in the town to which they went as day scholars, and while Irma won prizes for drawing and painting, and became a universal favourite owing to her lovely face and caressing ways, Ursula plodded along at the solid branches of education, and was too downright and independent to achieve popularity.

That Irma would soon marry was a fixed belief with everyone who knew her, but the years passed on and she still remained in the little house under the cathedral walls. Admirers she had in plenty, but she was hard to please, so her friends said, nor did they wonder at it, for who could hope to be worthy of the beautiful girl with her exquisite refinement of mind and her wonderful artistic powers. They loyal friends, and Miss Yorke herself was the most loyal among them; she had done her duty well by her own niece, but she did it with even greater goodwill for that niece's daughter, and when she died she left her the house and furniture with what

little money she possessed.

But that money was not enough to live upon-for Miss Yorke had had an annuity that died with her—or, at least, it could only be lived upon with the strictest regard to economy, and when the funeral was over the owner of the house and her nineteen-year-old sister held a solemn conclave.

"Let it!" said Ursula in her decided way.
"The oak panelling alone would attract people, and as there is a cedar tree to be thrown in, not to speak of a cathedral, you ought to get a good rent for it."

There was a look of pained surprise in Irma's eyes as she turned them on her sister, and a reproachful ring in her voice

as she answered her.

"I am afraid that I cannot put aside dear Aunt Caroline's wishes as easily as that," she said; "she meant us to live in the house, I know, and I could not bear to let it—it would seem such disrespect to her memory."

"It would be more disrespectful to her memory if we were to get into debt," said

Ursula.

"Dear child, you have a very blunt way of speaking," said Irma gently. "You do not mean it, I am sure, but it does try me very much at times, and I know it used to try Aunt Caroline. We need not get into debt if we go on living here; we must add to our income—that is a far better way. I will work at my pictures and you can surely find some employment that will bring grist to the mill."

She spoke with an air of finality that made Ursula drop the subject for the time being, but she had taken her resolution even while her sister was speaking, and the very next day she went down to see the head of the school in which they had been educated, and offered her services as

secretary.

"I know that I am not eligible as a teacher since I have no University degree," she said, "but I have often heard you say that you cannot go on without a secretary, and I know that that is work that I could do."

Miss Merton looked at her very kindly.

"I am quite sure that you could," she said, "but unhappily there is no opening for you here; the Council have waked up to the fact at last that I cannot get on without some help, but they are not inclined to give a salary, and as I have a cousin who has just lost her father and is obliged to turn out into the world, they have given me leave to have her to live with me, and she

will act as my secretary in return for her board and lodging."

"Then there is no hope for me," said Ursula sadly,

She was a favourite with her old headmistress, though she had not been overpopular with the girls, and Miss Metton pondered for a few moments in silence.

"I heard Canon Lexfield say the other day that he should have to get a secretary unless his eyes improved," she said at last. "I hardly like to send you to him, because it was no more than a casual remark; but you know them quite well, and you might go and call there, and perhaps something may be said that will give you an opening."

But no such diplomatic caution was needed, for when Ursula was ushered into Mrs. Lexfield's drawing-room, she found her in tears over the doctor's verdict that her husband must cut off many hours of work in the day if he wished to save his sight, and the girl's appearance on the scene led her to an immediate question.

"I wonder whether you know of anyone who could come and read and write for him?" she said, and Ursula's face lit up

as she answered:

"I came here to-day to ask you if you knew of anyone who had such a post to offer."

That was more than a year ago, and the plan had worked to perfection; Canon Leffield was a reserved and sensitive man, and he would have shrunk from the presence of a stranger, but he had known Ursula all her life, and the efficiency of her help and the tactful way in which it was put at his disposal soon made him wonder how he could have got on so long without her. Her salary was a welcome addition to the sisters' income, but the atmosphere of the quiet library was so congenial to her that she asked herself sometimes whether she had any right to take payment for work that gave her so much pleasure.

Yet though the shadows cleared away from Ursula's brow, they gathered more darkly on her sister's, and, hard as she tried to gain Irma's confidence, she could not discover what secret disquietude it was that caused them. What with her personal attractions, her pretty little home, and the interest of her art, Irma's lot seemed a very enviable one; but she was far too proud to confess that it was from the studio in which she passed so many of her hours that the

"'Your belief in me is the one thing that might inspire me,' he said '-p. 239.

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Drawn by Noel Harreld. look of care came that was se plainly

apparent.

The prizes that she had taken at the Oldchester Art School, and the distinctions that she had gained at local exhibitions, had given her a false estimate of her powers; she had imagined that she had only to send up pictures to the Academy to have them received with acclamation and hung in prominent places upon the line, and when disappointment awaited her, she found that it was more than she knew how to face. She did not give up the struggle, but the time that she spent in her studio was no longer irradiated with glowing visions; the complacency with which she had looked upon her paint-brush as a magic wand that was bound to bring her success had gone by for ever; she realised now that it was a tool, to be practised and employed like any other tool, she was no genius, such as she had fondly imagined herself, she was an insignificant item in the great band of workers, and if her pride would have allowed her, she would have been thankful to sink into obscurity.

But her pride would not allow her; the fame of her talent, of her artistic temperament, of her devotion to her art, had made, as it were, a kind of shrine about her. Her aunt had worshipped at the shrine, and the doctrine that Irma must not be disturbed, must not be expected to employ herself in the house, had been insisted upon until it had become a fixed article in the creed both of Ursula and of Ann, the old servant.

If she were to renounce her painting, that shrine would crumble away, and she would be left with no defence from the hard and cold facts of life that repelled her so intensely. No, it could not be done, she must work on, heping that success would one day come to her, and in the meantime she must manage to prevent her disappointments from coming to the knowledge of those around her

If she had lived in the midst of a circle of fellow-students this would have been impossible, but the good people of Oldchester were quite willing to take her on her own valuation, and as it had long been decreed that Ursula possessed nothing of the artistic temperament, she never presumed to question or criticise.

Ursula might not possess the artistic faculty, but there was something about her that no artist could have failed to admire, and as she came across the lawn on this

brilliant September afternoon she made a picture that was full of delight. Her hair was of a darker, warmer hue than the waves of pale gold that made Irma's head like that of one of Fra Angelico's angels; her eyes were hazel and not blue, her check had not quite the same rose-leaf fairness, but she looked all life—glowing eyes, crisp, curling hair, dainty, quick-moving hands and feet, and beside the languid graces of the elder sister she seemed like a Dryad of the woods waiting upon the commands of a goddess.

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"You are very late this evening," said Irma, lifting her eyes from her drawing. "Ann breught out the tea more than an

hour ago."

"Yes, Mrs. Lexfield asked me to stay and have tea there," said Ursula. "She was full of excitement because Laurence has come home."

Irma looked up calmly.

"I don't see that there is anything very wonderful in that," she said. "Laurence often comes down for the week-end."

"Ah, yes, but I don't mean that," said Ursula; "he has not come for a week-end, he has come back to Oldchester to live."

"To live?"

Irma was surprised now; the pencil dropped from her fingers, and she cast a searching glance on her sister.

"Do you mean that he has given up his prospects in London to bury himself in a dead-alive backwater like Oldchester?"

Her tone was unsympathetic, almost contemptuous, and Ursula flushed slightly as

she answered.

"He has been appointed medical officer in charge of the new hospital for paralysis," she said. "It will be opened in a few weeks, and he will stay with his father and mother till his rooms are ready. They are so delighted at the idea of having him near them."

But Irma's view of the matter evidently remained unchanged.

"I should have thought that they ought to be grieved," she said. "He is their only child, and surely they might have a little ambition for him. If he had stayed on at St. Barnabas' Hospital he might have become a consulting physician, with a house in Harley Street and a magnificent income. I think it is weak to throw away one's opportunities like that, and I wonder that you did not tell him so,"

"I did not see him," said Ursula. "He

THE BEAUTY-MAKER

had gone over to the hospital to meet the architect, but even if he had been at home I should not have thought it right to interfere."

Irma made an impatient movement.

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"That is what I call a want of moral courage," she said. "When I see him I shall tell him——"

But there she stopped, for at that moment a young man came out of the door that led into the garden, and walked towards them over the grass.

CHAPTER II

"THE QUEST OF BEAUTY"

WELL, Miss Wyndham, have you heard my news?"

Laurence Lexfield's honest eyes were full of eagerness as he put the question. Irma Wyndham was, to his mind, a being set apart from all the rest of the world, and a sign of pleasure from her at the prospect of his sojourn in Oldchester would have meant more to him than he could ever have told.

But there was no sign of pleasure in Irma's look or tone, and the light died from his face as she spoke.

"I have just heard it from Ursula," she said. "I am surprised that you should think of leaving London."

"I am not only thinking of it, I have done it," he said. "I came in this afternoon because I want to tell you all about it."

"That was very kind of you," said Irma. "Won't you sit down?"

He turned to place a chair for Ursula, but she had already slipped away; her clear-sighted eyes had read Laurence's secret long ago, and though she felt certain that her sister would never care for him, she wished to give him the chance of explaining his plans to her.

But Laurence did not begin with an explanation, he began with a question.

"Why were you surprised to hear that I was leaving London?" he asked as he sat down beside her, and looked earnestly into her face.

"Because I cannot understand how any man who has the opportunity of pushing on in life should be content to stand still," she said promptly.

He did not answer her at once, and in the stillness of the garden a strain of music was wafted along the air; it was the hour of evensong in the cathedral, and the swelling notes of the organ and the echo of the voices of the choir sounded like some angel melody floating down from the skies.

"I don't think that I am standing still

by coming here," he said at last.

"I suppose you mean that it will be a good chance for research work," she said. "It may, of course, be a good thing for you to be here for a time if you are going to make a special study of paralysis."

"May I tell you why I have come?" he said. "I have no right to worry you with my affairs, and yet I feel that I should like to explain them to you. Your sister has been such a help and comfort to my father that I feel as if our interests were, to some extent, the same."

He hesitated for a moment, but Irma made no attempt to help him out; she did not think that the interests of the two families were at all the same, but it would perhaps be scarcely polite to say so.

"You know how bad my father's eyes are," he said, starting again abruptly. "He ought to drop a great deal of his literary work, and he wants more looking after than my mother can manage. It will make all the difference in the world to them if I am at hand and can be always coming in and out."

He looked at Irma for approval as he spoke, but her face did not relax in the least

"I hope you will excuse my saying that that seems to me very short-sighted policy," she said. "If your parents need looking after, you could make an arrangement with someone to do it; but you yourself would help them far more by building up a fine practice and making a reputation. You will ruin your career altogether if you settle down here on a fixed salary and get out of touch with the great lights of the profession."

He winced a little at her plain speaking and pressed his lips together, then, leaning forward, he began again in a low and rapid tone, while a deep line furrowed his forebead.

"You cannot understand my action unless I explain its motive," he said. "My father has been denying himself for years past that he might give me a first-rate education, and it is quite time that it came to an end. If I were to set up as a consulting physician, I could not possibly live on what I

earned for the first few years, whereas this post provides me with an income that will make me independent, and which will enable me to help my father if he should be forced to give up work."

"But there is no fear of his being obliged to give up at present," persisted Irma; "and if you were to go on for a few years longer in London you might be well on

your way to the top of the tree."

"I might," he said slowly, "but all the chances are against it. I have done fairly well, but there are half a dozen men of my year, at least, who are better than I am, and they would certainly come before me if I were to put up for the next vacancy on the staff. It is much better to know one's own limitations, and I know mine thoroughly; to go on striving is a mark of courage, but to go on striving for the impossible is a mark of folly."

Irma winced a little at that, and her thoughts flew to the unwanted canvases that lined the walls of her studio; but she was not going to confess that she was

wrong.

"I do not think that it would be impossible for you," she said. "That is where we differ."

A gleam shot into his eyes as she spoke and his face flushed.

"Your belief in me is the one thing that might inspire me," he said. "If it would not be to break my resolution and turn my back on what I know to be my duty, I would go on fighting the battle in London, if only because you wished me to do so. But I am pledged now, and I must make the best of it. The work here will be thoroughly congenial to me; I have always been interested in these sort of cases, and I shall have fine opportunity of research, for Sir Walter and Lady Armstrong are very generous and will provide all that is necessary, I dare say you have heard that they are founding the hospital in memory of their only child, who died of spinal complaint."

"Yes, I have heard all about it," said Irma indifferently, "but I do not take much interest in hospitals. I cannot bear to think of the sordid details of pain and sick-

ness."

It was rather a heartless speech, yet, strangely enough, it sounded both right and natural to Laurence Lexield; for such a one as himself nothing could be more suited than a hand-to-hand struggle with

disease, but as to Irma, she was on a different plane altogether, and he would as soon have expected an angel with radiant wings to sweep and dust a house or to turn up the clods of clay in a field.

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And thinking thus, he fell into a

desperate blunder,

"But I would keep the sordid details from you!" he exclaimed. "Oh! Irma, you must have known how I love you Oldchester is a paradise to me because you are in it, and if only you can love me I will make a home for you that shall not be quite unworthy of you, even though it is in a hospital."

He was so carried away by his feelings that he did not see the look of utter astonishment that dawned in her face, but when she spoke, the coldness of her voice struck upon his heart like an edge of biting

steel.

"You make a great mistake in speaking to me in such a way, Dr. Lexfield, and I hope you will understand me when I ask you never to repeat it."

He had made a mistake—he knew it as soon as the words had left his lips. How could he expect Irma to respond to his low when he had given her no time to learn his aims and aspirations, or to realise the strength of his devotion? But to promise never to repeat his fault was beyond his power, and he told her so frankly.

"I ought not to have spoken to you of my love as yet," he said; "that I freely admit. But I cannot promise never to speak of it again, because I mean, God helping me, to try and win your love by every means in my power. You need not be afraid of my wearying you with it, but it will be there as long as my life shall last—unchangeable, immovable, ready for you whenever you choose to claim it."

His impassioned words beat upon her ear, but they had no power to move her

"I wish I could make you see how much better it would be for you to put all this out of your mind at once," she said. "You and I inhabit two different worlds, and nothing is farther from my thoughts than to step out of my world into yours. I have dedicated myself to Beauty. I like to think that in my humble way I am a beauty-maker, and the people that I care to be with are beauty-makers too—poets, artists, and musicians, whose souls are steeped in the light that never was on land or sea."

She sat gazing at the roses that trailed

THE BEAUTY-MAKER

over the wall with a rapt expression on her face, and Laurence told himself that she was like a fair flower herself, growing far out of his reach, and that to win and wear her would only be to drag her down from her heights of glory. Yet he was an enthusiast, too, in his own way, and he did not like to hear the profession that he loved spoken of with such disdain.

"I shall never have any kinship with peets or artists or musicians," he said, "and yet I hope that I may lay claim to be a beauty-maker. When I can bring the roses back to pale and sunken cheeks, or make a crooked spine straight, I feel that I am doing my part in turning sad and ugly things out of the world."

Irma smiled indulgently.

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"It must be very nice to be able to believe that," she said, but her tone implied that she did not share the belief, and Laurence chafed at it.

"You think that I am quite ignorant of beauty," he said, "but it is only that we look at these things from a different point of view. I was reading a poem the other day that I should like to have printed in letters of gold, and sent out far and wide through the world that everyone might read it."

He paused as if for a question, but Irma felt so certain that the only peem that he could appreciate was

> "How doth the little busy bee Improve each shining hour,"

that she would not show the slightest interest in his project for printing it in letters of gold.

"It was a poem in a new book by Mervyn Yorke," he said, seeing that she remained silent. "I have seen some of his things before and I have always liked them."

"I should not have thought that you would have cared for them in the least," said Irma, with a surprise that she could not repress.

"Perhaps not," he said quietly; "it is true, nevertheless. He is a dreamer and I am a worker, but there are dreams and dreams; the seers of old were dreamers, and the truths that they saw in their visions have become the eternal realities of the world."

"And what was this poem that you liked so much?" asked Irma with an uneasy recollection of the many dreams that she had had which had never become realities.

"It was called 'The Quest of Beauty,' " "I know I shall give a said Laurence. very poor account of it, but you must get the book and read it for yourself. of it is that a man sets out on his pilgrimage through the world determined to find Beauty, but at every point he is met by Duty, from whom he shrinks in disgust. And then at last, beaten down and utterly discouraged, he meets Duty in the most unattractive form that he has yet seen, and because his life is so empty and so miserable, he resolves to give himself to Duty, to work for her and cherish her, thinking nothing of his own happiness, and when his selfishness has all been purged away from him, Duty shines forth through her disguise like the stars of the morning, and he realises that in finding her he has found Beauty after all.

It sounded to Irma very much like How doth the little busy bee put into more poetical form, but she had always had a strong admiration for Mervyn Yorke's writings, and she could not treat them with the same scant ceremony that she gave to Laurence's ideas.

"I am sure that it must be a most charming poem," she said, "and since you have to live with Duty in its most unattractive aspect, I dare say that it is a great comfort to you. But you must not expect me to think about it quite as you do; you find Beauty in Duty, but I find Duty in Beauty—that is the difference between us, and it is a difference that nothing will ever bridge over."

There was a decision in the last words to which Laurence could not shut his ears; but even while he recognised that his case was hopeless at present, he would not admit that it would always remain so, and he was determined to make this understood before he left her.

"I ought not to have spoken so soon," he said, "but when I saw you here—lovelier than all the loveliness around you—I could not keep the words back. Please forget them as quickly as you can; let all be as it was before, and by and by I will try my fate again."

He got up with the last words, and, standing before her, took her hand in his.

"I shall never relinquish the hope of winning this as mine," he said in a tone that, low as it was, vibrated with intense feeling, then, bending forward, he raised it to his lips and moved away.

CHAPTER III

THE YORKE LETTERS

INCOMPLETENESS was the prevailing note of Irma Wyndham's studio, and, as a general rule, this did not trouble her in the least. All great artists, so she told herself, spent much of their time in dreaming upon canvas; the fancies that filled her brain must be set down at once for fear of losing them; they could then be finished when the mood took her, and if the mood never did take her—well, after all, they were a record that the charming fancies had once existed.

But on the morning after her interview with Laurence Lexfield she did not feel so well satisfied as usual as she looked at one attempt after another; she had scoffed at his ideas on beauty when he uttered them, yet, all the same, she had not been able to shake off the remembrance of them. bring back roses to pale cheeks and to strengthen crooked spines could not be classed under that beauty-making that seemed so all-important to her: but the fact remained that he had done something, that there was a solid achievement in his life, while her career was nebulous, unsubstantial, and, if the truth must be confessed, unsatisfactory, though Irma did not want to confess the truth, and, therefore, she lifted one unfinished canvas after another to her easel and looked at it critically with a view to possible completion.

A knock at the door interrupted her, and the maid entered with a small parcel.

"This was left for you just now, miss," she said, "and I brought it up because the butcher hasn't sent the meat for dinner, and I thought perhaps you would just step round and bring it, or tell him to send it at once."

A look of extreme annoyance passed over Irma's face; she had given repeated orders that she was not to be disturbed when she was in her studio, and she guessed at once that Ann had snatched at the excuse of the parcel to cover the intrusion. It was not possible that one single maid should run errands as well as do the work of the house, but it was equally impossible that an artist should undertake such a slavish task, and she laid the parcel down on the table with a severe air.

"I cannot leave my work to go round to the butcher's," she said, "but there are plenty of eggs in the house and you can make us a dinner of those." She turned back to her easel as she spoke, and Ann marched out, muttering a few uncomplimentary remarks to herself as she did so; great as her admiration of Irma might be, there were times when she wished that it was not so absolutely impossible to make her attend to practical affairs.

Irma had seen at a glance that the parcel was directed in Laurence Lexfield's handwriting, and when the door was shut she went on with her work, paying no more heed to his communication than if it had never appeared upon the scene. But the little packet would not allow itself to be treated so contemptuously; indifferent as she seemed to be, she could not forget that it was there, and, taking it up at last, she cut the string with her palette knife and unfolded the paper.

It was a letter that she expected to findal lengthy and agonised repetition of the pleading that he had poured into her ears on the preceding day; she expected it, perhaps she rather looked forward to it, for though she had no idea of listening to him, it was only natural and fitting that she should be beset by heart-broken suitors. But there was no letter—not so much as a single line—the parcel contained nothing but a book, a book daintily bound in white vellum, that bore Mervyn Yorke's name upon it, and had for its title the words, "The Quest of Beauty, and Other Poems."

She stood looking at it for a moment with a mixture of feelings, then, yielding to her curiosity, she threw herself into a chair by the window and began to read; it was not likely that a poem that appealed so strongly to Laurence Lexfield would have any attraction for her, but still she would not refuse to look at it.

But the poem had an attraction for hershe felt it as soon as she had turned the first page; for its fanciful allegory she cared nothing—Duty and Beauty were not the same, whatever Mervyn Yorke or anyone else might say about it—but there was such a flow of music in the lines, the language was so lovely, the ideas so novel and striking, that, having once begun to read, she could not lay it down until she came to the very last line.

Laurence would have been gratified if he could have seen her absorbed look and have watched the eager way in which her eye travelled along the pages, but perhaps he would have been less delighted if he had known what kind of thoughts the poem

"'I am afraid there is nothing of very much value here,' he said "-p. 238.

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Drawn by Noel Harrold.

awakened within her. It was not on its inner meaning that she dwelt, nor yet on the rejected but still faithful lover who had sent it to her; it was on a new and wonderful scheme of her own, a scheme which was to bring her the fame and success for which

she had waited so long.

Why should she not paint a picture illustrative of the poem and send it to some exhibition, where it should not only win her the plaudits of the crowd, but bring her the appreciation of the poet himself?-his appreciation and perhaps also his affection, for she had read an account of his career in one of the literary papers and knew that as yet he had found no kindred spirit with whom to unite himself.

More than once, when reading his books, the thought had passed through her mind that no lot in life could be more blessed than to love and be loved by such a noble soul as this, and if she could but put upon canvas the conception that filled her brain, the first step would be taken towards a

possible acquaintanceship.

There could be no doubt about which episode to choose-or, stay, would it not be better to paint a series of pictures: the setting out on the quest; the meeting with Duty; the final discovery of Beauty? It was an ambitious idea, far too ambitious for one of her attainments, but she did not pause to think about that, and having set up a fresh canvas she began to sketch in the forest background described in the poem, and the long road winding away in the distance. She worked at it all day, grudging the time to sit down and eat the omelet that Ann had made for their midday meal. She wondered why Ursula did not ask her why she was in such a desperate hurry to get back to her studio, but Ursula knew of old that her sister did not care to be quetioned, and, therefore, she appeared to take no notice of her frequent glances at the clock, and talked of some fresh trouble that had arisen with regard to Canon Lexfield's eves without resenting the fact that the replies she received were of the shortest and most indifferent.

Irma's state of exaltation lasted not only through that day, but through all the rest of the week; never had she seemed to have so clear an idea of the effects that she wanted to produce, never had she felt her hand and brain so fitly paired; but by the time that the next Sunday came round the glow was fading, and when on the Monday morning she looked at her canvas, the few hours that had clapsed since she had last seen it seemed to have robbed it of all vitality.

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She stood and gazed upon it, a dull weight of depression settling down upon her; it seemed extraordinary that she should not have been able to catch more of the glowing vision that had so entranced her. but it was useless to try to disguise her failure from herself, and, turning suddenly away, she hurried out of the room in the vain hope of escaping from the dejection

that possessed her.

It was not only the disappointment of her hopes of recognition that weighed upon her. it was the failure of her attempt to forge a connecting link between her life and that of the man whose powers and achievements she had so long admired. If she could only have carried out her purpose, some cemmunications must surely have passed between them, communications might have led to a meeting, and when once they had been brought face to face she could not believe but that he would have given her that love which would have lifted her to a new and far higher level. But the foundation on which she had built her airy castle had crumbled away, leaving it but the baseless fabric of a vision, and wandering aimlessly through the house she found each room drearier than the other, and told herself that it was very hard that one so well fitted to shine as she was should be restricted by the hampering circumstances of her lot. And then, just at that very moment, she cast her eyes on a literary journal that Canon Lexifeld had lent to Ursula, and the first name that she saw was the name of Mervyn Yorke.

That was natural enough, since advertisements of his books were to be found in every paper, but this was not an advertisement, it was a paragraph, and, snatching up the paper eagerly, she read it through.

"Mr. Mervyn Yorke writes to inform us that he is preparing a biography of his ancestor, Sir Thomas Yorke, the friend of Steele and Addison, and a well-known wit and poet of his day. Mr. Yorke will be much obliged by the loan of any letters or unpublished memoirs containing references to Sir Thomas, and if copies are forwarded to him at the offices of this journal, they will be punctually returned as soon as his book is completed."

Irma's eyes grew bright as she read, and

THE BEAUTY-MAKER

her lips parted with a smile of wonder and delight. Yorke was not a very uncommon name, and it had never struck her that there might be a connection between the poet's family and that of her mother; but it was clear from this paragraph that they sprang from the same stock, and not only so, but some old letters that had been bequeathed to her by her aunt might well serve for an introduction.

The letters had had no interest for her, they were not very legible, and as far as she could make out, they were extremely dull; but still she had not liked to destroy them, and locking them up in the box in which her aunt had always kept them, she had put them out of her mind as things of no

importance.

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But now their importance might be great, and hastening upstairs she took the box out of her wardrobe, found her keys, and drew out the precious packet. The paper on which they were written was yellow with age, the ink was faded, and the task of deciphering them was a puzzling one, but two or three of them were undoubtedly signed with the name of Thomas Yorke, and when she caught sight of a reference to "my worthy friend, Dick Steele," she felt that she need trouble herself no further. There was excuse enough here for a letter, and she mentioned the matter to Ursula that very evening.

"Yes, I should certainly write," said Ursula. "How interesting it would be if he should turn out to be an unknown cousin! We have so few relations, and he must be such a delightful person if he is anything

like his books."

Irma looked at her rather coldly; she had felt it right to consult her before taking any steps with regard to the letters, but there was no need for so much cordiality, seeing that Ursula did not pretend to be literary or artistic, but confined herself to the practical side of life. The next thing would be that she would offer suggestions for the letter that was to be written, and Irma changed the subject at once, and took care not to reopen it before she went off to her duties next morning.

But as soon as Ursula had gone she sat down to her desk with a pleasurable feeling of excitement, to which she had been a stranger for many a long day, and wrote a note, well-written and well-expressed, in which she mentioned the paragraph that she had seen, spoke of her mother's family, told Mervyn Yorke how it was that the letters had come into her hands, and concluded with an offer to have copies made for him if he should desire it,

The days that followed were full of suspense; she tried to go back to her painting, but all her attempts were useless, and as the time passed on and no answer came, she realised how much she had been building on this slender foundation. It was impossible that she should remain all her days in Oldchester, and since her own talent had not the power to release her, she watched and waited for this deliverer on whom she had fastened her hopes, as Andromeda watched and waited for the god who should descend through the air and unchain her from the relentless rock.

What if he did not appear? That was a chilling thought that made the faded leaves, with which the October winds were beginning to strew the lawn, seem a dreary presage of her future. Ursula apparently forgotten letters and poet alike, for she made no allusion to the subject, and Irma was glad, for she felt that she could not have borne questions or comments. But on the tenth day, when she had finally abandoned hope, she found a letter on her plate when she came down to breakfast, and at the first sight of the envelope, with its bold handwriting, an instant conviction seized upon her, and, tearing it open hastily, she found that it contained far more than she had dared to expect.

It was very brief, but it kindled a light in her eyes and gave a note of triumph to her voice as she handed it across the table to

her sister.

"Read that!" she said; and this is what Ursula read:

"DEAR MADAM,

"I have been in Paris on business, and only received your letter on going to my publishers this morning. I am greatly interested in its contents, and I think that the best plan will be for me to come down and look at the letters of which you tell me. If I do not hear to the contrary, I shall arrive at the Oldchester Arms next Saturday, and will call at your house on that evening.

"Yours faithfully,

"MERVYN YORKE."

CHAPTER IV

MERVYN YORKE

RMA would have liked it better if the sudden on-coming of autumn had not made it impossible for her to receive her poet out of doors. The old-fashioned walled garden, with its wealth of flowers and the view of the cathedral spires, would have been a perfect setting for the fateful interview; but since it was clearly impossible to have tea upon a rain-soaked lawn with whirling leaves tossed to and fro by the storm, she occupied herself with making the drawing-room as attractive as she could -a bright fire in the grate, a softly shaded lamp, a vase or two filled with chrysanthemums, and some graceful ferns in a little stand. She looked round complacently at her preparations when Saturday evening came, and felt that she need not be ashamed of the result.

To suggest to Ursula that she should not appear would never have entered her thoughts, but she could not help feeling that it was convenient that Canon Lexfield should have asked her to come back after tea and help him to fix in his memory the sermon that he was to deliver in the cathedral on Sunday morning.

"I hope you won't mind my being out when Mr. Yorke comes?" Ursula had said in all good faith, and Irma had replied magnanimously:

"You could not refuse Canon Lexfield, of course; but I dare say you will be back before Mr. Yorke leaves."

Fast as her pulses were beating, there was no trace of excitement in her manner when her visitor made his appearance; dignified and calm, she rose to greet him, offered him a chair, and sat down opposite to him with the light of the lamp falling upon the golden masses of her hair. She knew that she made a lovely picture as she sat there. But her thoughts were not of herself; they were of the poet with whom she had so long been familiar in his books, and who was now before her in flesh-and blood reality.

"I think that I had better show you the letters at once," she said, when their first greetings were over; and as she spoke she opened the bex that she had placed in readiness, and laid the packet before him on the table. "They are difficult to decipher, but perhaps you will be able to see if they are worth a closer examination."

He drew the lamp a little nearer to him, untied the faded ribbon, and began to turn over the letters with the quick. deft movements of one who is well used to such tasks; and while he studied them. Irma leaned back in her chair and watched him with drooping lashes that veiled the eager light in her eyes. He was a man of about thirty, apparently, with a pale clearly cut face, the lower part of which was hidden by a carefully trimmed bearing and moustache. He had fine eyes, very bright and piercing, and there was an air of distinction about his whole bearing that Irma noted with much satisfaction. He was all, and more than all, that she had imagined; he seemed to her to be the living expression of his poems, and she congratulated herself once more on the fortunate chance that had brought then together.

Yet, when he put down the letters at las, his verdict was not very encouraging.

"I am afraid that there is nothing a very much value here," he said. "I have only taken a cursory glance, of course, he the four letters written by Sir Thomas York are addressed to his sister, and they seen to be of a most commonplace nature. Be I must look them through more carefully: it may be that some of the other letter may contain allusions to him and his doings that would be of more interest that those actually written by himself. I in not like to take them to the hotel, but if I might come in again next week and look at them here, I would gladly stig on a day or two. I have never seen Oldchester before, and it seems to be a delighful old place."

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"It is a delightful old place," said Irma, with a fervour that had more to do with her satisfaction at the way that thing were going than with any appreciation of the town in which she lived. "It is small, of course, and the people are very provincial in their ideas, but there is a quain charm about it that endears it in a worderful way to those who know it well."

"Then I hope that I shall get to know it well," he said; and the tone in which he spoke assured Irma that the wish was no figure of speech. "But there is out task that we must not delay any longer, and that is the tracing out of our mutual relationship. I have brought down a copy of the family pedigree as far as I have been able to make it out, and I was

THE BEAUTY-MAKER

you to look at it and supplement my information."

No proposal could have fitted in better with Irma's inclinations, and though they were obliged to end with the decision that they were fourth cousins, twice removed, she felt that they had made a great advance in intimacy, and that meant far more to her than any tie of blood.

They were chatting like old friends when Ursula returned, and she made the introduction as though Mervyn Yorke was a friend of years' standing.

"My sister has been at Canon Lexfield's house this afternoon," she said, and before she had time to add more Ursula interposed:

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Irma was too well-bred to frown, but she was intensely annoyed all the same. Pretences were wrong, no doubt, but there was no need to fling facts in people's faces. Mr. Yorke took no notice of the announcement, however, and replied to the former remark.

"I was at Harrow with a son of Canon Lexfield's," he said; "we drifted apart when we left school, I went to Oxford, and he went to a hospital; but I have never forgotten him. He was a sterling fellow, through and through"

Irma was quite ready to agree to that, but she said to herself that to be sterling through and through did not prevent one from being very dull. She did not want to waste time by talking about Laurence, and Ursula annoyed her for the second time by keeping up the subject.

"Dr. Lexfield has just taken a post in Oldchester," she said; "he has been made medical superintendent of a hospital for paralytics that has just been established here."

Not all Irma's good breeding could save her from a frown this time. To be a secretary was prosaic enough, but to be medical superintendent of a hospital for paralytics was infinitely worse. This was not the kind of conversation for a poet, and with a desperate resolve to put a stop to it she took up a little book that lay at her side.

"Will you forgive my making one request?" she said. "I do not know when anything has touched me so much as your poem on 'The Quest of Beauty.' Will you let me have the pleasure of hearing you read it?"

A lesser man would in all probability have indulged in excuses and protestations, but Mervyn Yorke was far above any petty vanity. He saw that Irma really wished him to read, and, taking the book from her hand, he began without a moment's Smoothly and melodiously the hesitation. beautiful lines flowed from his lips, and as he read, the scenes of the poem rose up in vivid clearness before the minds of his hearers. They saw the glow of the morning in which the traveller set out on his quest, the saffron light in the sky, and the glitter of the dew upon the grass; they felt the crisp freshness of the air and heard the mounting song of the lark as it flew up to the gates of the sun. And then the scene changed, and in the dust and glare of the noontide they saw the menacing form of Duty, and shuddered with the traveller at the thought of linking his lot with one so stern and forbidding; and as the long, weary hours passed by, they felt the strain and stress which swept away the joy and peace of the morning, until as evening fell and soft hues of sunset irradiated the land, the veil dropped from the form at his side, and Beauty herself stood before him in all her transcendent

"I can never thank you enough!" cried Irma ecstatically as he closed the book and laid it down. "I loved every word of it before, but you have made it a living thing to me."

She was well satisfied that all the thanks came from her, and that Ursula sat silent. She did not know that there were tears in her eyes, and that Mervyn Yorke had seen them, but she felt some slight vexation when, instead of talking with her about his poems, he turned back to her sister and renewed the subject of Laurence Lexfield.

"I must go and call on him to-morrow," he said. "I should like to see him again immensely. Where is he to be found?"

"You will be sure to find him at his father's house to-morrow afternoon," said Ursula. "I know that he will be lunching there."

"But perhaps Mrs. Lexfield would think it an intrusion for me to call upon her?" he said; and while Ursula assured him that Mrs. Lexfield was always delighted to welcome any of her son's friends, Irma wondered how he could imagine that a call from one so distinguished as himself could ever be an intrusion.

She was not quite pleased to find that he had a friend in Oldchester. She would have liked their house to be the only one that he visited, and of all the people in the place the Lexfields were the last with whom she wished him to associate. But since she could not prevent it, she felt it better to put a good face upon it, and when the morning service was over and the Canon's sermon successfully delivered, she followed Mrs. Lexfield out of the side door, and came up with her as she crossed the Close.

"We had a most interesting visitor yesterday," she said, "and I believe that he is intending to come and see you this afternoon. You know Mervyn Yorke by name, of course; it turns out that he is a connection of ours, and he has come down to look at some family letters with the hope of finding material for a book that he is writing."

"That is very interesting, I am sure," said Mrs. Lexfield abstractedly. "But why is he coming to call on us?"

The question was a natural one, but it disconcerted Irma, nevertheless, for she had a strong objection against speaking of Laurence to his mother.

She was saved from the necessity of an answer, however, for at this moment Ursula interposed with her usual directness.

"Mr. Yorke was at Harrow with Dr. Lexfield," she said, "and he wants very much to see him again. He said that he was afraid you would think it an intrusion if he called, but we told him that we were sure you would be quite delighted to see him."

"Of course I shall be glad to see him," said Mrs. Lexfield cordially. "Laurence has never said that he knew him, but I have often heard him speak of his books. Will you not both come in and have tea this afternoon?"

Irma hesitated for a moment; she was anxious to keep out of Laurence's way as far as possible, and at any other time she would have refused at once. But the temptation of meeting Mervyn Yorke was too strong for her, and it was with a pleasant feeling of anticipation that she made her way back across the Close to their own house. His visit to Oldchester was a brief one, and who could tell when he would come again? She must take advantage of every opportunity, even when it was fraught with such discomfort as a

visit to the Lexfields' house was bound to produce.

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Anticipation is too often a sure road to disappointment, but for once Irma was to find that the reality far exceeded her hopes Not only did Laurence abstain from any mark of attention, but he engaged Ursula in a conversation that left Irma free to listen to the delightful interchange of thought and idea between Canon Lexfeld and his guest. The Canon had been an inveterate reader until his eyesight began to give way, and in his Oxford days he had been a leading spirit in a group of intellectual men, all of whom had made an impression on their day and generation He was eager to hear what was doing in literary circles in London, and as Ima heard their talk she told herself that this was life, and that if she could only escape from the dull backwater in which her bams was stranded, she should find the congeni atmosphere for which she longed, and the her powers unfold and expand as now the could never do.

"It makes me long to be young again! said Canon Lexfield at last, with a smit that had a good deal of sadness in it. "In working day is nearly over, but I could find it in my heart to envy you who have the long hours still before you."

"Yet sometimes I am coward enough the find the long hours very toilsome," said

There was a wistful tone in his voin as he spoke, and Irma's heart went out it response to it. That was how she felt, she, too, knew that heart-sinking sensation of weariness, and she felt herself draw still closer to the man whose every though seemed to be attuned to her own. See hoped that he would propose to walk had with them when they got up to go; but he merely shook hands, and said something about seeing them again on the next day and then turned to Laurence.

"I should like to go out to the hospital, if I may," she heard him say as she made her farewell to Mrs. Lexfield. "I am ver much interested in that kind of werk."

It is all very well to be polite to old friends, but that was surely carrying it little too far. A poet could not possible be interested in hospitals, and as for paralytic patients, they must be positively repugnant to him.

It was not her place to charge him with insincerity, however, and comforting hers! with the reflection that on the morrow there would be no disturbing elements, and that she could talk with him to her heart's content of the beauty that they both loved, she went home to dream of the delights in store for her.

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CHAPTER V

FALSE HOPES

THE delights that Irma dreamed of came to her in no stinted measure. It was true that the letters proved to be of little value as far as the Memoir of Sir Thomas Yorke was concerned, but that only showed that the attraction which drew Mervyn to Oldchester was one of the present and not of the past. For his first brief visit was soon followed by another, and that other seemed to afford him so much pleasure that Irma was not surprised to hear that he had taken rooms in a house near the cathedral, and meant to pass some weeks there, out of reach of London fogs.

"I must be at the Museum again after Christmas," he said, "but for the moment I can get on with the notes that I have already made in the library, and there is a peace and repose about this place that make it a most congenial atmosphere for work."

Irma had not found the atmosphere at all conducive to work, and an uneasy wonder crossed her mind whether the defect lay perhaps in her own powers, and not in the place, to which she had so often attributed it. But why should she trouble herself any longer over her work? It was quite evident that Mervyn felt the charm of her society, and as his wife she would have a career of induence and interest without any effort of her own.

The time that followed was a halcyon one in her life. There was nothing to hinder Mervyn from coming to the house as often as he wished, for the fact of the cousinship was known in Oldchester, and, distant as it was, it seemed to be an excuse for frequent visits. Day after day he dropped in at tea-time, when the lamps were lit and the little table with its shining silver and dainty china was set out beside the fire, and indulged in long talks with Irma, while Ursula poured out the tea and did her part as the Martha of the establishment.

She had but one accomplishment, this

useful and practical sister, and that was a sympathetic touch upon the piano and a feeling for music that made up for her want of technical skill. Irma liked to hear her play, for she found that it helped her to dream the dreams that she afterwards tried to put upon canvas; and Mervyn liked it too, apparently, for he leaned back in his chair with his head on his hand and a look of content on his face, as though the thoughts that the music roused in his mind were very pleasant to him.

There was one person who did not share in the delights of this time, however, and that was Laurence Lexfield, who kept away from the Close as much as he could, and devoted himself, morning, noon, and night, to his patients. His parents were conscious at times of a feeling that his return to Oldchester had not given them so much of his company as they had expected; but any hint of such a thing was sure to be followed by an account of the thousand and one matters that had to be attended to at the start. By and by he should have more leisure, the place would run of itself when it had once been set going, and he should have plenty of time on his hands; and though there was a shadow on his brow that they did not quite understand, they put it down to his work, and never once dreamed of connecting it with the presence in Oldchester of that most delightful man and distinguished poet, Mervyn Yorke.

December had come now, a cold, cheerless December, with high winds and grey, cloudy skies; but still Mervyn did not take his departure, as most people had prophesied that he would do as soon as the autumn sunshine vanished. He found no fault with the climate; he praised it, in fact, as being so much better than London, and declared that he had never felt more braced up than he did after a long course of tramps over the Downs that stretched away behind the town.

Irma was sitting by the fire as usual one evening, waiting for the sound of the step that had come to mean so much to her; whether it was really love that stirred her heart was a question that she had never asked herself. The thought of the conquest that she had made gratified her vanity and roused her ambition; it meant a new life for her, a life that would fulfil her fondest desires, and her mind was too

full of these thoughts to have room for any other.

She was thinking of the future now as she sat gazing into the fire, and it looked as bright and glowing to her as the blazing logs on the hearth. If anything should come to dash her hopes to the ground! But she would not let that idea enter her mind, and dismissed it in haste.

"A note for you, miss," said Ann, opening the door at that moment, and she seized it quickly and tore it open, fearing that that unwelcome idea had been a premonition of coming disaster.

But the dread died away again as quickly as it had arisen. The note was only a pencilled line from Ursula to say that she was detained by some work for Canon Lexfield, and that she might not be back till nine o'clock.

She had hardly read it before a knock was heard, and in another minute Mervyn Yorke stood before her. She gave him her hand in greeting with a strange lightness of heart, and motioned him to his usual chair opposite her own.

"The tea will be here directly," she said. "Have you been for one of your long walks this afternoon?"

"Yes," he said, fixing his eyes upon her in a way peculiar to him when his mind was busy with some train of thought. "I have been on the Downs. The wind was battling with the clouds, it was determined that the sunset light should be seen; but the clouds clung closely together and cried that all was dark, all was desolate, and that, whatever the wind might say, they would hang their gloomy pall over the earth."

"And who won the battle?" asked Irma, exulting in the thought that he could thus speak out his inmost soul to her.

"The wind won it! He would listen to none of their lamentations, but scattered them to left and right, and set free the glory that lay behind them. And my battle was won, too, and my resolution taken, and I came back from the Downs ready to put it to the test at once."

Irma was not sorry that the door opened just then to admit Ann and the teastray. She knew what the resolution was that he had taken up there on the Downs, alone with the wind-tossed clouds. She had felt that her happiness was on the way for two or three days past, and she wanted to dally with it a little and to delay the

inevitable hour that would turn her dream into reality. There was plenty of time before them, owing to Ursula's absence, and she lingered over the little details of this first meal that they had taken alone together with an enjoyment that had something almost childlike in it.

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"Where is your sister to-night?" he asked after a while.

"She is staying later than usual at Canon Lexfield's," said Irma. "He seems to grow more and more dependent upon her, and says that he cannot imagine how he ever got on without her."

"I can quite believe that," said Mervyn.
"She has a wonderful capacity for work."

He was silent for a moment while he looked thoughtfully at the fire; then rousing himself suddenly, he said in a different tone:

"But all the same, I am glad that you are alone this evening!"

Irma's heart beat faster as he spoke, and the colour deepened in her cheek. It was coming then, the wonderful fairy gift that was to alter her whole life, and in the rapture of that thought she could find to words to speak. But that did not matter, for he went on without waiting for any reply:

"I have talked to you of a great many things since I first came here, but I have never talked much to you about myself. I have no one very near to me left, and I have got into the way of thinking that people are not interested in my affairs. My parents both died while I was a child, and my sister did not long survive them. I have never had any struggle with poverty such as literary men are always supposed to go through; my father left me enough to live upon, and no disaster has ever swept it away from me."

He paused again, and again Irma said nothing. It seemed rather a long preamble, but she would not have had it shorter or any account. Every word was full of interest, and the climax would be all the more thrilling when it came.

"But though I have not been hampered by poverty, I have had trouble," he said presently—"a much worse trouble, to my mind. I have suffered greatly from ill-health, and till quite lately I was haunted by the idea that I should fall a victim to consumption. That is gone now. I wented a very clever doctor, who not only found that there was no trace of the disease.

THE BEAUTY-MAKER

but put me under treatment that has made a new man of me. If it were not for his favourable verdict, I should not be here now, for I always told myself that the happiness of love was out of my reach, and that I must never allow myself to think of it."

"That is a very sad doctrine!" she said, for his eyes were fixed upon her with such a searching gaze that she felt that she must say something to hide her embarrass-

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"But you should be the first to own its wisdom," he said, with a smile. "I know your views of hospitals and sick people. However, that is over and done with, and I only mention it because I want to be perfectly straightforward in all my dealings with you. New and wonderful hopes have been stirring in my heart since I came to Oldchester, and while I was up on the Downs this afternoon, watching the battle between the wind and the clouds, I told myself that the time had come when I, too, might struggle to get free from the gloom that had so long hung over my life-that I, too, would strive for the light that should flood it with a golden glory.'

It was very beautiful to be made love to by a poet, and Irma listened with a dreamy enjoyment that lulled all her senses. Nothing could well be more different from poor Laurence's blunt promise to make a home that should not be altogether unworthy of her, even though it was in a hospital. Mervyn, on the other hand, seemed to have a difficulty in descending to anything so prosaic as details. She felt as if she were floating in a rosy cloud, and the sensation was so delicious that she hardly wished to be aroused from it by anything so definite as an actual offer.

"I have told you all this about myself," he said, after a long silence that yet had hardly seemed to be a silence, so crowded was it for both of them with eager thoughts and longings, "and I thank you with all my heart for listening. You have seen what my hopes are—I have made no effort to hide them—and having seen them you do not forbid me to speak?"

A look was her only answer, for she could force no words to her lips, but it seemed to satisfy him, and, rising to his feet, he bent over her and laid his hand

on hers.

"I shall see you to-morrow," he said.

"I cannot tell you how happy you have made me—I will not even try to tell you."

His voice trembled over the last words, trembled and died away, and before she could answer he was gone, and the sound of the opening door told her that he had left her in the very moment of ecstasy. What a nature his was—as delicately tuned, as highly strung, as an æolian harp! She had felt a slight pang that he should leave her so abruptly, yet, after all, she would not have had him different. It was Beauty that she worshipped, and what could be more beautiful than a love that expressed itself in a manner so entirely original!

She sat on without moving, her head resting against the cushions of her chair and a smile playing round her lovely mouth as she gazed into the fire. Ann came in and removed the tea-things; the clock struck seven, and it struck eight, but still she did not stir. She wanted no occupations except her own thoughts, and it was with the utmost reluctance that she roused herself when she saw that the hour of nine was drawing near and that Ursula would soon be coming in.

"I will not speak of it yet," she said to herself. "I want to keep it to myself a little longer, for it is all my own

And as the thought passed through her mind she heard the front door open, and she drew her chair back into the shadow that Ursula might not read her face.

as long as it is hidden in my heart."

"It is rather late for Canon Lexfield to keep you," she said, striving after an ordinary tone, but without much success.

"Yes, it is late," said Ursula, "but I

She crossed the room of

She crossed the room quickly as she spoke, and kneeling down by her sister's side, put her arms round her and held her close.

"He has met her and told her!" was Irma's instant reflection, but before she could make any answer Ursula spoke again.

"Oh, it is all too wonderful! I could never have dreamed of such happiness! He says he has loved me from the first day he saw me, and I think that I must have loved him without knowing it, for when he told me I felt as if his love was the one thing in all the world that I wanted. He said that he had asked you whether he might speak, and that you told

him where I was, and he felt he could not wait till to-morrow, so he came to the house with a book that he had borrowed, and then he asked me if he might walk back with me. The clouds had all cleared away, and the moon was shining over the cathedral towers, and as we looked at it together he said—he said—"

But what he had said was too sacred for repetition, and, leaving the rest of her story untold, Ursula fled away to the

shelter of her own room.

CHAPTER VI

THE BLOW

HOW long Irma sat there she never knew. The blow had been so terrible, so utterly unexpected, that she felt absolutely stunned. But a few moments before the world had seemed to her to be steeped in beauty, and now a horror of desolation had swept across it, blotting out the light and colour, and leaving it a dark and formless void.

Her sensations were too vague at first for her to be able to grasp them, but as the first shock passed away she became conscious that her prevailing feeling was anger rather than grief. He had deceived her, so she told herself, wilfully led her on that he might make a mock of her; and Ursula had betrayed her-she must have seen, have felt, what was going on in her sister's heart, and yet she had allowed herself to be drawn into love for a man with whom she had no true affinity. They were false accusations, born of jealousy, but they took full possession of her heart, and as she sat there, with dry eyes and lips set in a tense line, she asked herself how she could face the future without revealing her humiliation.

It was no easy question to answer, but she made herself answer it, furrowing her forehead into anxious folds and clenching her bands till the knuckles showed white through the skin. No one should ever guess her discomfiture—that was the conclusion to which she came; she would carry her head so high and bury her feelings so deep in her breast that those who had wronged her should never have the triumph of knowing the anguish that they had inflicted upon her.

And even while she made her resolution, a voice in her breast told her that she had only herself to blame, that Mervyn was as incapable of falsehood as Ursula, and that it was her own blindness that had betrayed her. But self-reproach did not heal her wound, and as she sat there, wrestling with her misery, she once more fell back on the visions of fame and success which had grown dim of late. If she could not find Beauty in love, she would seek it in art; she would create it on her canvas, or die in the attempt.

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That resolve did bring a little balm to her pain, or, at any rate, it gave her strength to bear her pain, and enabled her to meet Ursula with a smile when a last she came back to the drawing-room But to hide the marks of the confic through which she had passed was beyond her power, nor did she altogether regre that they could be seen, since Ursula's question gave her the opportunity of saying that she had a bad headache and mus go to bed early. She had thought the she should not close her eyes all night, but a heavy torpor weighed her down a soon as she laid her head upon the pillow, and though in the early hours of the morning her pain leaped out upon her like a wild beast from its lair, she kept it a bay by fixing her mind on vast schemes of work, and managed to appear at the breakfast table with a very fair show of

And not only to appear at the breakfast A far harder task than that was before her, the task of meeting Mervyn Yorke when he came to ask for her sister's hand. It was cruel enough to be obliged to stand by and see Ursula preferred before her, but it was far worse to find herself treated as Ursula's guardian, almost as her parent. She would have been thankful if she could have refused to see him, but that was not possible, and she had to force herself to listen to a statement of his means and of the generous settlement that he was prepared to make, and, worse than all, to hear the outpouring of his happiness.

She made her escape as soon as she could, and, leaving the lovers together, she went up to her studio and began turning over her canvases with feverish eagetness.

"The artist finds himself in suffering"—that was a sentence which she had read long ago, and which came back to her now in this hour of her agony. Well, she would prove its truth, and when he saw

her success he would recognise too late that he had passed by the one who could share his artistic temperament and enter into all his inmost thoughts. The discovery would involve Ursula's misery, but what of that! Why should she not suffer as well as the sister whom she had supplanted?

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That mood lasted through several days, but when the news of Ursula's engagement began to spread, when letters arrived and callers came to congratulate, it faded away, and was succeeded by a flat dreariness that was far harder to bear. Blameworthy as she might be, she was indeed much to be pitied, for there was no hope of respite for her, Mervyn was remaining in Oldchester for the present, and she could not leave Ursula. Whatever her feelings might be, she was obliged to be constantly in the foreground, to act the part of the kind and sympathetic elder sister, to appear to be happy in Ursula's happiness, and to aid her in her preparations.

For the wedding was to take place without delay. There was nothing to wait for, since Mervyn was well provided with this world's goods. He had long intended to make a trip abroad, as soon as his book was through the press, and by the end of January he would be ready to claim his bride and carry her off to the realms of sunshine.

There was much to be done, therefore, and since Ursula, for all her practical qualities, was young and inexperienced, Irma was obliged to think and to plan, and to take an active part in the providing of the trousseau, which her pride would not allow her to stint in any way,

If it had not been for the jealous pain that devoured her, she must have acknowledged that Ursula's joy was a beautiful thing to see. Since the days of her childhood the dominant note of the younger sister's life had been work; if Irma was to have leisure to dream, someone must toil in the background-toil, not only at the actual earning of money, but at the many household tasks for which their one servant had no time. She had never rebelied at her lot; she had never even felt that there was anything to rebel against. Irma had the temperament that she lacked, and therefore it was clearly ordained by Providence that she should use her practical qualities on her behalf. And then, as she went cheerfully on her way, this strange and beautiful thing had come to her—love had unfolded his radiant pinions in her sight, and a flood of glory had straightway poured itself into her life.

"You must have had a prevision of me in your thoughts when you wrote your poem!" she said one day as she and Mervyn walked together over the Downs. "I had made up my mind that the beautiful things of life were not for me, and then suddenly the most beautiful thing of all was given to me, and the whole world became a different place."

She looked up at him with a smile, but he was gazing far away into the distance, where the greys and browns of the wintry landscape were touched into brilliance by the sun.

"It was of myself that I was thinking," he said, "and I wrote it at the time when I had definitely told myself that love was never to be mine. I am ashamed to tell you how I kicked against the pricks. saw no chance then that my health would ever be better, and I hated the idea of drifting into invalidism more than I can tell you. And then-I am laying bare my inmost soul to you in telling you this-I went to a picture exhibition last spring, and there I saw a painting of Jacob wrestling with the angel. It was a splendid piece of work. But it was not that which appealed to me so much: it was the oldworld story, as full of meaning for us as it was for Jacob. Trouble comes to us all; it wrestles with us, wrestles and prevails, so that we go halting all our days; yet in its suffering it blesses us, so that we may say with Jacob, 'I have seen God face to face." "

He was silent for a moment; then, drawing her hand through his arm, he pressed it to his heart.

"There is no other human being to whom I could have told that!" he said.

There were tears in Ursula's eyes, but she brushed them away.

"It is just that which seems so wonderful to me," she said. "I could have understood your loving Irma; she is so full of artistic feeling and has so much in common with you. But I am different altogether. I shall never understand why

you loved me."

"Shall you not?" he said in the low, thrilling tone that she had learnt to know so well. "I admire Irma immensely; she has all kinds of gifts and graces, and I

shall be proud to have her as a sister; but you are the other half of myself. I cannot give you any other reason for my love than that. I have been waiting for you ever since I was born, and I did not feel that I was meeting you for the first time when I saw you. I felt as if I had lost you long ago and found you at last, and I vowed that I would never let you go again if only God would grant me the blessing of your love."

"It will be lonely for Irma when I have gone," said Ursula, after a silence, during which they walked on hand in hand, with

hearts too full for speech.

"I hope that she will marry, too," said Mervyn, "I can see that Lexfield loves her, and he is one of the best fellows in the world."

Ursula looked grave.

"Yes, I think that there are few like him," she said, "and I am afraid it is true that he loves Irma. I say 'afraid' because I don't believe that she ever gives nim a

single thought."

Ursula was right, though she did not guess what it was that absorbed her sister's mind so completely. Irma never once thought of Laurence during those weeks that were such a terrible ordeal for her, nor did he make any attempt to recall himself to her memory. He was very clear-sighted, this stern and grave man of science, and he was so certain that Irma's heart was breaking for Mervyn Yorke that he took the utmost pains to keep out of her way, fearing that some unwary word or look might betray his knowledge to her, and so add to the burden that she was forced to bear.

He had not been able to avoid meeting Mervyn, for he was a frequent visitor to the old house in the Close, and Canoa Lexfield found such pleasure in his society that it would have been churlish indeed to treat him with anything but cordiality.

"I have a plan to propose to you," said Mervyn one evening when he came in, to find Laurence with his father and mother. "I shall be leaving Oldchester directly after Christmas, and I want to do something as a thankoffering for the happiness that I have found here. Will you let me give a Christmas treat to your patients? I should like a tree with presents, and I could get a conjurer down from London if you think that would amuse them. I have asked Ursula about it, and she and

some of her friends are ready to sing

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Then he should at last have to meet Irma!—that was the thought that went through Laurence's mind like a lightning flash. But he had no right to deprive his cripples of such a pleasure for any personal reason, and his answer was as hearty as Mervyn could have desired.

"You could do nothing that could give more delight," he said. "What evening

would you like to fix?

"Christmas Eve, I think. We are all dining here on Christmas night."

"I had not told you that yet, Laurence, said his mother. "I asked Irma and Ursula if they would come with Mr. Yorke I knew that it would be as great a pleasure to you to have them as it will be to us."

Poor Laurence! It was a very doubtful kind of pleasure! If only Irma had held out some hope to him, what a blissful evening it might have been: his father and mother secure in the happiness of their long years of wedded love; Mervyn and Ursuh in the full flush of their new joy; he and Irma in the first dawn of a joy that was ye to be. But that last thought cut him to the quick, and, with a hurried word of farewih he made his escape.

CHAPTER VII

A HOSPITAL CHRISTMAS

IRMA was not going to the Christmas treat at the hospital; that was a point upon which she had fully made up her mind It was to be given in the united names of Mervyn and Ursula, and to see them the centre of attention, receiving thanks and congratulations and dealing out their joint benefits to the assembled patients, was an ordeal that she could not even contemplate Mrs. Lexfield had promised her son that she would be there, and since Ursula could go with her there was no possible need for her to martyrise herself. The dinner on the following evening would be bad enough, but from that there was no escape unless she could manage to catch a convenient cold But the colds that are so ready to come when they are not wanted hang back with a remarkable shyness when they might be really useful. Not the faintest trace of one would come to her aid, and when Mrs. Lexfield came round on the morning of the eventful

THE BEAUTY-MAKER

day and announced that it would be impossible for her to go to the treat after all, Irma knew that her fate was sealed. had not even the poor satisfaction of making a great favour of it, since everyone took it for granted that she was going in any case, and that she must be looking forward to it

with the keenest interest.

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It was the first time that she had been inside the hospital gates, for, as she had said, she hated sick people, and the mere thought of coming into contact with them was repugnant to her; but there was no help for it now, and it was with the feeling of a victim on the way to execution that she got into the carriage that Mervyn had provided to take them to the scene of the festivity.

She was certainly to be pitied, this queenly-looking woman, with the crown of golden hair and the tall, willowy figure clad in its draperies of silk and lace. Not a pair of eyes in the room but was turned upon her admiringly, yet of all those present there was no one so wretched and heart-

weary as she was.

She did not venture to look round at the patients, for she dreaded the sights that she might have to encounter, and she occupied herself with talking to some of the members of the committee and their friends, while Mervyn and Ursula passed up and down the ranks of spinal couches and invalid chairs, shedding smiles and greetings in all directions. It was not their first visit to the hospital by any means; they were well-known figures there, and the delight with which they were greeted showed that the patients, in spite of their bodily afflictions, had hearts that were full of warm and affectionate

The carols came first in the programme, and, seated in the front row of the audience, Irma was able to listen to the sweet strains of the singers without being disturbed by any disagreeable sensations; and even when the feeble voices behind her were lifted up in the chorus of " Nowell," or "Good Christian men, rejoice! " she managed to shut her ears against them. Then came the lighting of the tree and the distribution of the presents, and she sighed heavily as she saw the eagerness of everyone concerned: what childlike hearts they must have to be able to find interest in these simple Christmas pleasures, and how strange it seemed that any human being could be amused by the mystifications of a conjurer!

So far, Laurence had kept religiously away from her, but as he cast a furtive glance at her from the opposite side of the room he saw the dreariness of her look, of her whole attitude, and, yielding to an irresistible impulse, he left his place and came and took a seat by her side.

He asked her no questions, he made no excuses for not having spoken to her before; he merely leant towards her and said with a smile: "Do look at that little fellow just behind you; his face would make a perfect

study for a picture! "

She did not want to look, but it was scarcely possible to refuse, and, turning reluctantly, she saw what seemed to be a baby angel just fluttered down from the skies. Bright shining curls clustered round the head, the big eyes were gleaming with rapture, the tiny hands were clasped together in ecstatic delight.

"Me wants the boofer bunny!" cried Jacky, as the conjurer held up by the ears the rabbit that he had just taken out of his wonder-working hat; and he would have tried to wriggle up from his reclining couch if a detaining hand had not been laid upon

Not much to shrink from there, but as Irma's gaze fell upon the figure beside him she shuddered and turned pale. Twisted and misshapen form, sallow, distorted face, it was hard to believe that it was really a human being who leant over the boy, and all the delicate susceptibilities of her nature cried out in revolt. Not a word passed her lips, but Laurence had read her look, and, bending towards her, he spoke so that none but she could hear.

"That is one of our saddest cases: she was sent to us as a last hope, but I am afraid we shall not be able to do anything

for her."

"But you surely ought not to keep her, especially where there are children!" said Irma in a tone of irrepressible disgust.

"That is just why I want to keep her," he said quietly. "She was not always the battered wreck that you see now, she was once a happy wife with a child of her own as charming as our little Jacky. Her husband died, and she worked for herself and her boy, but one day he strayed away and fell into a millpond. She leapt in after him and held him up with one hand while she clung with the other to a projecting piece of wood. She was found at last, but the child was dead, and she was so hopelessly injured on one side that paralysis set in, with the result that you see."

"What a fearful story!" said Irma, shuddering again. "But I cannot think that it is right to leave her with children. It is quite shocking to see that lovely little child stroke her face as he did just now!"

"And yet it is the touch of that little child that has brought her back to life," he said. "Brain and heart seemed absolutely dead when she came to us, and I was on the point of saying that she must be taken away again, when one day she saw Jacky, and I can only tell you that since then it has been like seeing the soul return to a dead body. She thinks that he is her boy come back to her, and the love that he gives her is reviving her faculties in a perfectly marvellous way. That is beauty-making if you like—beauty-making in its highest and noblest form."

He had not forgotten her words, then; so scrupulously had he kept himself out of her way that she had come to the conclusion that his love had been no more than an idea—a fleeting idea—and that probably by this time he was congratulating himself upon his escape.

But she did not think that now—she could not think it in view of the look in his eyes as they rested upon her, of the quiver in his voice as he alluded to her words. He cared for her still; she knew it beyond a doubt, and if her heart had not been so sore the knowledge would have gratified her even if it had waked no answering affection.

"We cannot discuss beauty-making now," she said; "it is not a subject upon which we are likely to agree. Besides, you must go and propose a vote of thanks to your conjurer; his entertainment is just over."

Their talk had not been very satisfactory, but he hoped for better things on the next evening, and though any private conversation was impossible at the dinner table, he watched his opportunity when they went into the drawing-room.

"I suppose you know how anxious we are about my father?" he said, by way of an opening, for he was afraid to begin with any personal remark. "His eyes have been getting rapidly worse, and there is no doubt that he will have to resign his canonry. I want him to take a small house in Old-chester, for I cannot leave the hospital, and I must keep them near me."

"Would they like my house?" said Irma.

"Your house!" he exclaimed with a start.
"But you are not thinking of going away?"

"Yes, I have settled to go; I cannot afford to stay in it alone, and it would be very lonely for me without Ursula. I am going to London, and I shall give myseli entirely to my painting."

He made no answer, his heart was to full; yet even in the first brunt of his disappointment he told himself that to be wholly separated from her was less cruel a fatthan to be near her and yet at the same time divided from her by a gulf that he could not pass. He knew that she was suffering, and he longed to comfort her, but nothing that he could say or do would be of any avail, and with the unselfishness of true love he hoped that a change of scene might distract her thoughts.

He made no further attempt to talk with her, for the decision that she had taken showed him plainly that he was nothing to her; nor did he try to see her during the days that followed. Her time was full to overflowing, and perhaps of all those who knew her he alone realised how strangely she had altered since Ursula's engagement Her languid, dreamy ways had all dropped away from her and a relentless energy had taken possession of her. It was not the preparation for the wedding alone that occupied her: Canon Lexfield had been only too glad to take her house off her hands, and there were numberless things to be done with regard to future arrangements. Her furniture was to be stored for the present, and she was going to take rooms in London -that was all that she told anyone of her plans; but in the excitement of the wedding no one seemed to take much interest in the doings of the bride's sister. Mervyn cared nothing for show and grandeur, but he was so well known a man that the people of Oldchester could not but think it a great event that he should be married in their midst, and the friends who were coming at his invitation were lights of such magnitude in the literary and artistic world that it was no wonder that everyone was anxious to be there for the mere pleasure of catching a glimpse of them.

The wedding was to be in the cathedral, and, in spite of the most gloomy prognostications as to the weather, the January day dawned clear and bright, and a ray of subshine fell upon the bride as she walked up the aisle in her flowing white draperies. Very fair and sweet she looked, and to Mervyn she

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"The Christmas tree is all alight with candles, and the patients look so smart. They are having their presents now "—p. 255.

Drawn by Noel Harrold.

seemed like the fulfilment of his most exquisite dreams. But there were many in the congregation who thought that Irma far outshone her; it was only Laurence who saw the dark line of pain under the elder sister's eyes, and who detected the note of weariness in her voice as she stood in her little draw-

ing-room receiving the guests.

The resources of Cedar House were taxed to the utmost, but Irma had accepted offers of help from no one, though more than one of her friends would have been ready and willing to lend their house for the occasion. The refreshments were of the simplest, but everything was good, and though the excellence of the arrangements was attributed as a matter of course to Ursula and the faithful Ann, Irma alone knew how much of it was due to her own personal efforts. She had no thought of mentioning it-she was rather ashamed of it, in fact; but there seemed to be a strange driving power within her that sprang from the very shock that had shivered her life into fragments. She could not understand it, she did not try to explain it; but she felt thankful for it, since it enabled her to keep up appearances in the eyes of the world.

It was all over at length, the last congratulations acknowledged, the last farewells said. The bride and bridegroom went off amid general acclamations, the guests went home to talk over the events of the day, and hardly anyone gave a thought to Irma except Laurence Lexfield, who saw nothing but the shadow of pain in her beautiful eyes as he made his evening round

of the hospital.

He pictured her desolate, weary, and despairing, weeping her heart out as she thought of the joy that had been wre-ted from her; but if he could have transported himself to the house on which all his thoughts were centred, he would have seen her divested of her wedding finery, and pale and stern as a statue as she turned a deaf ear to Ann's entreaties that she would rest. and began to dismantle the house in preparation for her departure into the unknown world that stretched before her, dark and cold.

CHAPTER VIII

MAIDA VALE

RMA knew quite well what was going to happen now: the success that prosperity could not give her was to come to her by

way of adversity. She had read of such cases often in the pages of biographies more often still in the pages of novels where the author could mould events at his will, untrammelled by hampering realities An earthquake had shattered her life, and the genius that had lain hidden in the depths of her being would now come to the light would bud and blossom and reveal is beauty to the world.

It was that secret conviction that had sec tained her through the last few weeks; ? was that thought which sustained her non that the familiar streets of Oldchester were left behind and she was launched at

London's limitless sea.

But so little had Irma mastered the science of everyday affairs that she had not any idea of the difficulties that awaite her, and even though the expenses of the wedding had crippled her severely, she was quite easy in the certainty that she should be very well off now that she had no rate and taxes and no servant's wages to par She set about looking for lodgings, then fore, in the most unbusiness-like way the it was possible to imagine, thinking only the suitability of the rooms, and not at all of the rent that she might have to pay in The landladies whom she inteviewed took her measure at once and showe a most flattering eagerness to open their doors to her. "A real lady what don't know the price of nothing "-that was how she struck them, and, naturally enough, the were anxious to secure her.

Maida Vale was the part of London the she had selected, chiefly because she had read of artists who had lived in that neigh bourhood, and she soon decided on three rooms in a comfortably furnished house. Less than three would be impossible, since one was to be used as a studio, and must of no account be desecrated by meals or hi chance visitors. Two guineas a week dil not seem to her at all an out-of-the-way charge, even though it was accompanied by unspecified "extras"; but since her whole income was little over two hundred a year. and there were many expenses before herd which she had taken no account, she little knew the trouble that she would have to make both ends meet. That was not presing as yet, however; Canon Lexfield had paid a quarter's rent in advance, and she had money in hand with which to make her new start in life. It was now the beginning of February, and she must work with all

her might for the next two months if she was to have a picture ready to send to the Academy. To turn back to the "Quest of Beauty" was not to be thought of: she must find something as far removed as possible from Mervyn Yorke and his poems; but though she spent hours looking over her canvases, she felt an utter dissatisfaction with each and all, and decided at last to begin a fresh subject altogether.

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A figure piece involved models, a landscape demanded work in the open air; both were alike difficult, but as the less formidable of the two she engaged a model, and set to work upon a picture of Rossetti's "Sister Helen" weaving her fatal spells over the waxen figure of the man who had deceived her. She had no desire to bring any evil fate upon Mervyn Yorke, nor could she honestly say that he had played her talse; but the poem had a strong attraction for her at the present moment, and she threw herself into her work with an intensity of purpose that ought surely to have made her success certain.

But though Irma worked ceaselessly through every hour of daylight, though she denied herself rest and recreation and thought of nothing but the picture on her easel, she could not conceal from herself that it was not what she had intended it to be. It was hard work to finish it, but she went on to the bitter end, had it varnished and framed, and when once it had been sent in refused to admit the possibility of rejection for a single instant.

She would not admit it up to the very moment that she broke the seal of the letter with the well-known crest upon the envelope, but when she had read it she sat long with her eyes fixed upon the brief statement printed across the sheet. She was to fetch her picture away, as if it were so much rubbish—an unconsidered trifle of no account to anyone. Each word bit into her brain as if it were some fiery poison, yet she went on staring at them, unable to turn her gaze away.

A knock at the door aroused her from her stupor, and Mrs. Edmonds, the sour-faced landlady, matched into the room, a sheet of blue paper in her hand.

"I hope you'll make it convenient to pay this," she began abruptly. "Three times I've brought it in to you, and each time you've said that you were too busy to attend to it. But there is such things as County Courts, and they're never too busy to see that a poor widow gets her rights, and if you can't let me have the money-"

"Give me the bill!" interposed Irma, her anger at this impudent assault making her tone more than usually haughty; but as Mrs. Edmonds handed it to her, her face changed. She had paid her weekly two guineas with the utmost regularity, but she had been thoughtless enough to let the account for extras stand over, and the sum total that it had reached fairly appalled her, while at the same time she realised that after this lapse of time it was impossible to dispute the items. She could not pay the whole amount by any manner of means, and to be obliged to humble herself to this most unpleasant woman seemed to her to be the last drop in her cup of misery.

"I am very sorry that you should be put to any inconvenience," she said, "but I will pay you something on account and settle the rest as soon as I get my next remittance."

Mrs. Edmonds eyed her uncertainly as she spoke; she had had too many such promises made to her to put much faith in them, but, on the other hand, if she showed too great a distrust of her lodger, a sudden flight might ensue that would leave her without redress. It was best to temporise, but she accepted the proffered instalment with so ill a grace that Irma felt her powers of endurance almost at an end.

Mervyn and Ursula had just come back from a prolonged wedding tour in Italy, and she knew that she had only to tell them her troubles to receive their ready aid; but she would rather starve than submit to that, so she told herself, and as soon as she had got rid of Mrs. Edmonds she put a number of her sketches into a portfolio and set off for the City, a fire of determination in her eyes.

It was a wretched day, wet and dirty, with a rasping wind that set her nerves on edge, and when she arrived at the office of the Art Agency for which she was bound, her spirits had sunk to such a low ebb that she fully expected to be met by the announcement that they were so full up that they did not care to consider anything more. Things were not quite so bad as that, however; the sub-manager was willing to see her, and with a renewed flutter of hope she followed the porter up the stairs and was ushered into his room.

"Well, what have you got to show us?" he said with scant ceremony, for his time

was precious, and the artists who came to offer him their work were as the sand of the sea for multitude.

She longed to show her resentment at his manner, but that would be mere folly, and, opening her portfolio, she laid some of her drawings on the table before him. He glanced at them quickly, and then as quickly pushed them away.

"No good to us," he said; "not our style. Too vague. You aim at high art, but don't quite get there."

It was the story of her career in a nutshell, but to hear it uttered in those uncultivated tones by this disagreeable-looking man who sat staring at her, with his chair tipped up and his hands in his pockets, made its truth doubly bitter. She went white to the very lips, and trembled so that she could scarcely stand.

Perhaps he pitied her, perhaps he only recognised her beauty and saw that she was not one of those who usually climbed his office stairs; but whatever his motive may have been, he pulled the drawings towards him again and took another look at them.

"That bit of black-and-white work isn't bad," he said in a condescending tone; "we have an opening just now for something of that sort, but you would have to be willing to sink your own ideas. The last illustrator we sent them wouldn't take orders, and that is why the post is open now."

"What would the work be?" asked Irma, subduing with some difficulty her desire to turn her back upon him and march out of the office.

"Illustrations for catalogues," was the unexpected answer. "Swift and Exton's is one of the most up-to-date furniture firms in London, and they send out fresh advertisements every day in the year. A smart illustrator can make a regular two guineas a week out of them; but you must go after it to-day and take some of your work with you. There are sure to be a hundred people in the field as soon as the vacancy is known.

Irma could have laughed aloud in scorn as she descended the stairs again. She—who had dedicated her life to the making of Beauty—to be reduced to drawing bedsteads and washstands for illustrated catalogues! The idea was so revolting to her that she would not entertain it for a moment; and yet as she walked along Fleet Street and the Strand she did entertain it, for it came back to her again and again, and would not

be denied. Money she must have, and unless she humbled her pride to beg it of her brother-in-law she must earn it herself, and since the artistic work that she loved seemed to be valueless, she must earn it is the mechanical drudgery that was offered to her.

That was the mortifying conclusion to which she was ferced to come, and, turning back, she went to the address that had bee given to her and sought an interview with the head of the advertising department.

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"Well, we will give you a trial," he said in a tone that showed he was not in the least impressed either by her or her won. "We don't want any ideas from you, by we want you to be smart in taking up or ideas. You can start at once, and you he better be here by half-past nine to-morous, because we shall have a consignment of new fire-stoves that must be catalogued a once."

"I shall tell no one about it—I canno, was Irma's thought as she left the office at made her way to the hotel where she made her way to the hotel where she made pay her first visit to the bride and bridgeroom. Such degradation could not be fessed, above all to a poet. But Merry and Ursula were too much engressed their own affairs to ask her many question nor could she blame them when she four that an offer had just been made to him the professorship of literature in an Australian University, and that an immediat decision was necessary.

"I want him to go," said Ursula in the few minutes that she was alone with the sister. "I have had to nurse him most the time that we have been away, and the doctor thinks that this appointment would be the very thing for him because of the splendid climate."

"Then you have not found so much beam in your new life as you expected?" sal Irma, the bitterness at her heart forcing the ungracious words from her lips.

A look of indignation flashed acres Ursula's face, but it was quickly succeeded by a smile.

"Oh, Irma! how little you understand! she said. "I cannot bear to see Merrys suffer, but the more that I have to do to him the more beautiful our life together seems to be. I only wish you could know such happiness as mine."

But Mervyn came back into the room a that moment, and Irma was saved from the necessity of a reply.

CHAPTER IX

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THE CHRISTMAS TREAT

WHEN Irma accepted the offer made to her by Messrs. Swift and Exton, she had looked upon it as a merely temporary expedient, to be thrown aside as soon as she was once more straight with the world; but the fates had decided otherwise, for Mervyn and Usula had no sooner taken their departure than she one day received a letter from her lawyer that filled her with dismay. The shipbuilding firm in which the principal part of her aunt's money had been invested had gone bankrupt, and her income was suddenly reduced to about seventy-five pounds a year.

Irma understood nothing about business; her aunt had had implicit confidence in her lawyer, and Irma had simply accepted his advice as final. She had no reason to doubt him now. The paragraphs that she saw in the newspapers fully confirmed his state-The failure had been quite unexpected, but it was absolute and complete, and the unfortunate shareholders could expect no redress. That Miss Yorke had been unwise to leave so much of her money in one concern was doubtless true, but it was useless to go back on that now: the fact remained that Irma had suddenly become poor, and that she had to face her new circumstances as best she might.

Where was the beauty of the world now? It was brilliant June weather; the sun shone in the blue sky and the parks were filled with flowers; the season was at its height, and everyone looked smiling and gay; but Irma felt as if a veil of crape had fallen between her and the brightness that surrounded her. If the sky had been hung with clouds and the summer breezes had been grinding east winds, she could not have felt more dreary, more utterly disconsolate.

But adversity was doing its work in her; that was proved by the way in which she met her trouble. If she had been really as aimless and ease-loving as she had appeared to be in the old days, she must have let the waves go over her head and given up the struggle; but there was a latent strength in her character that she had deliberately chosen to ignore, and that strength came to her aid now.

To keep her misfortunes a secret was impossible, but she wrote to Ursula that she

was not to worry about her, that she had plenty of remunerative work on haud, and that she should have no difficulty in getting on; while to her friends at Oldchester she merely wrote that she was leaving her present rooms, and that as her address would be uncertain they had better communicate with her through her bankers.

That done, she set to work to frame her life on new conditions. A studio was no longer necessary, and she took a lodging in a small house in a back street at fifteen shillings a week. Her pictures were worthless, apparently, but the despised hackwork for Swift and Exton would provide her with the means of existence, and she threw herself with all her might into her drawings of stoves and bedsteads. Her head often ached sorely and a mortal weariness possessed her, but she had no sunlit garden now in which to sit and dream of Beauty: she must work whether she was in the mood or not; and although she did not realise it, she turned out far better drawings in her hot and stuffy little room-annoyed by the smell of cooking and by the noise of the landlady's children-than she had ever done in her luxurious studio at Oldchester.

"We have an entirely novel idea for our Christmas catalogue," said the advertisement manager one day, when Irma presented herself in the office with a sheaf of finished drawings. "We are going to send out a book with illustrations in colour of some of the rooms that we have furnished. That American millionaire whose house we did up in Park Lane will let us use one or two of his rooms, and we shall have the kitchen at the new Imperial Hotel and the Board-room of the National Transport Company. They are to be really artistic things, reproduced by the three-colour process. I have been dividing up the work this morning, and I want you to do something attractive of the Sisters' rooms at St. Barnabas' Hospital. I will see that you get an extra fee if you send in some really tasteful sketches."

There was no reason why Irma should feel reluctant to undertake such a pleasant piece of work. Laurence Lexfield had passed out of her life, and the fact that he had been connected with St. Barnabas' could have no possible weight with her. Yet she did feel reluctant, and it was with the utmost difficulty that she infused a proper gratitude into her tone as she thanked the manager for his kindness.

"I suppose there will be no trouble about getting permission to make the drawings?"

she said as she turned to go.

"Oh, no, that's all right. We wrote to
the treasurer, and he gave leave at once.
They are badly in want of funds, and we

shall put a word or two of appeal into our letterpress."

It was with very mingled feelings that Irma found herself, sketching materials in hand, entering the doors of St. Barnabas' Hospital and traversing its wide, bare corridors. Laurence had never been anything to her; he was less than nothing now; yet he was vividly in her thoughts as she climbed the stairs with which his feet had once been so familiar, and passed through the wards in which his days had been spent.

She still dreaded the sights and sounds of hospital life, and though she received a warm welcome from Sister Victoria, with whose sitting-room she was to begin, she found it very trying to have to sit in the open doorway, with a continual tramp, tramp of doctors and nurses along the passage, and, worse still, the occasional glimpse of a helpless patient on a trolly going up to the operating theatre.

But though her thoughts were full of Laurence, she little expected to hear any mention of him, and she almost betrayed berself by a start when his name caught

her ear

"I suppose you have heard about Dr. Lexfield's new work?" said one of the house surgeons as he paused to speak to the Sister at the door of the ward.

"Yes, he wrote to tell me that it was out," replied the Sister. "I have seen several notices of it, and I fancy that it is going to make a big sensation."

"It will, and it deserves to make a sensation! He has mastered some obscure points about paralysis, and thrown a flood of light on their treatment. It is a beautiful piece of work, and it will add enormously to his reputation, though that was not his object in writing it."

A beautiful piece of work! Irma could hear his voice now as he told her that he, too, in his own way, was a beauty-maker, and her cheek burnt as she remembered the scorn with which she had answered

him.

What would be think of her now if he knew the hamble work to which she had descended—work which was not redeemed

by the high and beneficent aim that inspired his tasks of healing.

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It was a very salutary hour that see passed as she sat there, block in hand, and, deep-rooted as was her objection to hospitals, she felt glad that she should have to pay a good many visits to & Barnabas' before her contributions to the catalogue were finished.

Nor, when the contributions were finished did her visits cease. Sisters and nurse alike had taken a great interest in he work, and almost against her will de found herself on terms of friendship win more than one among them. It was stranghow her dislike of sick people wore of when she came into actual contact win them, and how the self-sacrifice and the courage that she saw all around her begat to influence her own life.

"You will come to our Christmas tree, won't you?" said Sister Victoria one de "You must make time for us someher,

whoever gets left out."

It was no reluctance that made Impause before accepting the invitation; a was the sudden sense of the mysteries workings of that "Providence that shas our ends, rough hew them how we will". She had longed to get away from Oldchess that she might plunge into artistic society and find a congenial environment for he talents; but now that her desire had because omplished, and she had cut herself adrift from her old life, what had agained? The illustration of catalogues at an occupation and hospital nurses for her companions!

The Christmas treat at St. Barnabas' would be her one and only festivity, for she had kept out of the way of her few acquaintances in London, and a visit to Oldchester was out of the question. How little she had thought last year, when she had tried to devise excuses for her absence from lanrence's fête, that she would be looking forward at this next Christmas time to a treat in a hospital as her only relief from the wretchedness of a cheap and lonely lodging. The thought haunted her mind as she made her way through the fog and slush of a London Christmas Eve, and it remained with her through all the greeting of the patients-cheerful and eager-eyed it their beds in spite of their pain-through all the feasting and the singing and the innocent hearted revelry.

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rough d the things enjoy themselves!" said Sister Victoria. "And the best of the entertainment is still to come; some of the doctors will be here directly to distribute the presents from the tree."

They appeared in the doorway even as she spoke, and Irma's heart almost stopped beating as she recognised among them the well-known form of Laurence Lexfield. Why the sight of him should have such an effect upon her she could not tell, seeing that she had always maintained that she was entirely indifferent to him. Yet when she saw him her one thought was of escape, and as Sister Victoria hurried forward to give him a delighted welcome, she slipped away from the circle round the tree, and took refuge in the farthest corner of the ward.

A blind woman lay in that corner, a woman old and disfigured by disease, who had made herself disliked by both nurses and patients. She was rough-tongued and disagreeable, and Irma had never so much as cast a look in her direction. But any port in a storm, as the saying goes, and, making for the distant bed as for a shelter, she sat down on the locker and looked at the back of the grizzled head.

"A happy Christmas to you, granny!" she said.

Not a sound, not a movement—the old woman still lay with her face to the wall; but as Irma bent closer she saw tears stealing down the withered cheek, and, yielding to a sudden impulse, she laid her hand on the knotted fingers that rested on the counterpane.

"Have you got a heartache, granny?" she said. "It's a bad thing to have a heartache at Christmas time; but I can feel for you, for I've got one, too!"

Slowly the sightless face turned towards her, and the old woman answered her in tones of scorn:

"Yes, that's likely, ain't it? I know who you are. They've told me about you coming to the ward with your face like a picture-card and your rings on your fingers! I knowed who you were when you touched me, and you ain't got no 'eartache! You might 'ave if you was me. It ain't much of a Christmas to lie 'ere and see nothin' an' nobody tell you nothin', an' my old man at 'ome with the bronchiters in 'is chest! I can creep about an' wait on 'im, though I ain't got me sight."

Beauty in that life, too! Irma's eyes

grew dim as she listened. She—loveless, useless, selfish—was far lower in the scale than this poor blind woman of the slums.

"I will go and see your husband if you will tell me where he lives," she said; "and since you can't see how pretty the ward looks, let me describe it to you. There are lovely flowers, and the Christmas tree is all alight with candles, and the patients look so smart in the new red jackets that Sister has been making. They are having their presents now—" She came to a sudden stop with the last words, for a figure appeared at the end of the bed and a familiar voice sounded in her ears.

"I have brought you a present from the tree; just feel how soft and warm it is!"

She sprang up from her seat with the idea of trying to slip away unseen, but the attempt was useless, for Laurence utered her name in accents of amazement: "Irma! How did you come here?"

Escape was impossible, but at least she might try and baffle his inquiries. Yet when the honest eyes once met her own, with their look of eager interest, of tender solicitude, she found it hard to keep up the barrier.

"I must finish distributing the presents," he said, "but promise me that you will not go until I have had a talk with you. I want to tell you about my father; he has had a serious operation."

If he had said that he wanted to hear about her own doings she would have evaded the promise, but she could not be so churlish as to show no interest in his father's illness; and when the tree had been stripped and the patients left to a little much-needed repose, she found herself walking beside him along one of the corridors. There was nothing romantic in het surroundings, nothing beautiful; yet to her great surprise her heart beat fast and the colour went and came upon her cheek.

But perhaps this was not so very wonderful after all, for the first glance of his eyes had told her that he still loved her—truly, tenderly and devotedly—and in the same moment that she learnt his love she learnt also that she loved him in return. They might have been walking through the leafy glades of a forest for all she knew, or through the marble halls of a king's palace. But then a sudden wave of bitter memory swept over her, and she forced herself back into reality again.

"Is your father at Oldchester?" she

asked, hoping that her voice did not sound so strangely in Laurence's ears as it did in her own.

"No; he is in a London nursing home; that is why I am here to-night. We hope that the operation has been successful, and that he may have some measure of sight again; but I did not like to go back, so I got a friend to take my place for a week or two. If it had not been for that-" He broke off for a moment, then turned towards her with a sudden movement, his whole soul glowing in his eyes. "It is no use!" he said. "I made up my mind that I would never worry you again about my own feelings, but they are too strong for me now that I see you face to face. I will not ask you to love me-that is more than I can hope for-but I ask you whether I may love you and care for you now that you are alone in the world."

But with the last words her head went up and her eyes flashed with a fiery gleam. "No!" she said. "If I cannot love you, you shall not waste your love upon me!"

He stood as if transfixed, the colour slowly fading from his face, and in the silence the echo of Christmas strains stole along the corridor from a distant ward:

> " Peace and goodwill! Goodwill and peace!"

It sounded like a mockery to Laurence, but before he could move or speak Irma had come a step closer to him, and her voice breathed in his ear.

"Laurence," she said, "I know that you guessed my secret, for I saw it in your face, but I want to tell you that I never really loved Mervyn. I thought that I loved him, but I know now that it was only the hope of hiding my failures that made me think of such a thing. I thought that he would take me away from my old life, and make everything fresh and delightful to me; but if I had been successful with my purtures I should never have wished him to be anything to me but what he is now-a kind and true friend. But you are different. I could not take your love just because I have failed to make a career for myself, and it is that feeling that shows me that I love you."

Her hands were in his now, his face was close to her own, and though there was; smile on his lips, his eyes were dim.

"You told me a moment ago that I we not to love you if you did not love me he said, "and now you tell me that I must to love you because you love me! I sounds rather contradictory, and, anywait is very confusing!"

"But surely you can see what I mean she exclaimed. "I am a dismal failur the beauty that I tried to make has a slipped away from my grasp. I earn more by drawing chairs and tables, and it all that I am fit for. You must wait all that I am fit for something splendid, and the then perhaps I will come to you!"

"But you have done something splendid he said. "You have had troubles and lose and you have fought your battle brank And more than that, you have been put beauty into other people's lives. Six Victoria was talking to me about you in now, and she told me what they all the of you here, and how the patients was for your coming. You are making bear if not exactly in the way that you intended and so I am bold enough to ask your come and make it in my life, to though that life must still be lived in hospital."

Her eyes were veiled by their long laste but a smile of ineffable sweetness trenk on her lip, and she let him draw her deto his side.

"It is Mervyn's poem over again," said. "I found Duty instead of Beam and now Duty reveals herself as Beam I have not deserved such happiness, In rence, and I don't think that I ought take it."

But he answered that with his lips thers, while the distant voices lifted up the strain once more:

"Glory to God in the highest, On earth goodwill and peace!"

And there, in the bare hospital commenter pledged their faith to each other vowing to walk till death should part the along that path of wedded love, when for those upon whose union Heaven smile. Duty and Beauty go ever hand in hand.





BY APPOINTMENT

A FAIR BELIEVER IN COLMAN'S BATH MUSTARD

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ISSUED BY BOOTS PURE DRUG CO. LID.



How, When and Where Corner, Christmas, 1913

MY DEAR COMPANIONS. Our magazine is so full this month that I am warned that our Corner must " be short." For us that is rather sad, because I have so many letters you'd be delighted to read. However, I will give as many extracts as the printers can crowd in, and omit altogether the Christmas story I was intending to tell.

But I must say that to each one of you, my boy and girl friends, I wish the very happiest and jolliest of Christmases. If you let the true Christmas spirit of self-giving

and love dominate you, yourselves and all your thoughts and actions, then, I have no shadow of doubt, that wish will be fulfilled. And remember, every time that Christmas spirit triumphs over another spirit, in any one individual, the whole world is being helped, just a wee bit it may only be, but it is being helped, towards that glad time when Christ's kingdom of Love and Peace and Goodwill shall be supreme the wide universe over.

Be sure, all of you, to tell me lots about your Christmas doings. You will enjoy reading what Elsie Hibberd tells us concerning her German Christmas:

"DEAR ALISON, This morning I had a letter from Germany, and it just reminded me that I had not sent my promised note about a terman Christmas, so ani writing it

All German families do not, of course, keep Christ-mas in exactly the same way, but all are similar to a certain extent. I will, however, try to describe the Christmas kept by of Stuttgart, as it was with them that I first learnt the art of keeping

Preparations for this festivity begin a long while before the day, for although they make no Christmas puddings or mince pies, they make heaps of cakes, or, rather, biscuits: they are made in many shapes and sizes and styles by the mother of the household, but all are put on big trays and carried down to the baker to be cooked. When finished, they are all put in a chest of drawers which is beautifully lined with The home decorations differ slightly white paper. from the English, for they never have paper chains, and it was by my introduction that we had a bunch of mistletoe under the hall gas. The rooms are decorated with garlands of fir tree branches; holly and decorated with garlands of fit tree branches; hony and
fit tree cones hang very prettily. From the gas in
each room hangs a small wreath of fit tree green,
suspended by three red ribbons, and somehow it
would not seem Christmassy without this wreath.

The tree is the chief item, however,

and ours was a large one, reaching from the floor right to the ceiling, No presents are hung on the tree; is decorated only with silver oured ornaments, angels and coloured ornaments, tairies' hair, silver garlands, frost, snow, and glass icicles, and on each branch are several white candles,

All the toys are brought down from the loft, where they have been stowed away since the previous Christmas. These toys are doll's house, kitchen, and such playthings that are large and too cumbersome to be kept about all the year.

The festivity commences on Christs I never felt so funny mas Eve. before in my life as when at seven o'clock the large room door was unlocked by the father, and one by one in turn, including the little servant maid, we all trooped in and took our seats. The room was little lighted only by the candles on the tree, which, as we know, give a very subdued and soft light. The piane The plane was played, and we all stood and was played, and we an stood and sang the German Christmas hyungs and songs first, "Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht," then "O du trodde he, O du selige," and lastly hrohliche, O du selige," and lastly "O Tannenbaum, O Tannenbaum, wie treu sind deine Blatter." Atter this part, which gives one a very selemn feeling and a good realisafrom of all that Christmas is, we all



Nesta Prichard.

THE QUIVER

went to the table, where all round in our own places were gifts of all sorts and sizes. I remember I had a were gits of an sorts and sizes. Tremember I had a pretty plant in a stone vase given me, for I so missed our flowers and garden of home. When everyone had looked long enough at these gifts and duly ad-mired everyone else's things, we went to the small room for supper, when, of course, we could enjoy those longed-for biscuits.

After the first excitement of Christmas was over we After the first excitement of Christmas was over we calmed down and spent the evening very happily, with music, singing, and so on. That night in bed I had terrible home-sickness, for although I had had such a pleasant time, I still thought that in England they had not yet begun their excitement. Christmas morning was, however, to be exciting for us too. Aunt Agnes was to be engaged to be married, and in Germany a great amount

of fuss is made on such an occasion. What they did in the morning I do not know, but I expect cooking for the party which was to be held. I went to the English church, as to me that seemed part of as to me that seemed part of Christmas. It was a nice ser-vice, and the church was most beautifully decorated with holly and evergreens, flowers and plants, and up by the altar were four huge Christmas trees. By the time I arrived home the people to the narty had also seemed. the party had also arrivedaunts, uncles, cousins, grand-parents, and friends all came. The dinner was, of course, quite German, and very nice, and the day was spent in merrymaking and games generally. It was handy that —— and some of their relations all had their flats in the same building, for we were able to go from one house to another when we felt like it. The day after Christmas, I think, must have been a Sunday, for we all went out for a long excursion through the forest.

Amid all this excitement

Amid all this excitement and happiness there is the pathetic side, for everyone, poor or rich, young or old, all have a tree, even if it is only a wee one, with four candles. Grandma had a little tree, and an old lady who was ill in the top flat asked my friend Julie and me to go up and see her tree and sing to her, which we did, and really it was quite a sad sight to see the poor, ill lady in bed with her tree by her side, unable to move, or sing, or join in the holiday, yet content because she was still able to have a tree.

have a tree.

Of course, ale at Christmas time there are many excitements. The German church had a huge tree lighted by candles, and I went to see it one Sunday. Then, of course, there was a great amount of show and ice, and we went tologgaming, and I tried to skate. Theatres, concerts, and dances were on, the same as in England, but the few holidays are the chief days.

The trees vary, of course. I saw many at different houses, some were decorated with gold only, some silver, others were coloured; but in no house was there a tree missing, and never is a present hung on

At home, now, we always have this custom, but not on Christmas Eve. We keep our Christmas quite in English fashion, until after tea on Christmas Day, when we turn out the gas and have our tree alight. It is simply lovely. I am sure it could now never be

Christmas without a tree, and if the other Companies

Christinas within a time think so too.

When I next write I will try and find something else to tell you about—perhaps a German wedding. for they are very different from English ones. Yours with much love,

ELSIE M. HIBBERD."

Elsie has a Letter Prize this month

The Holiday Letter Prize Result

How those holiday letters differed! Some were so long that they would have filled ha our magazine-and others were too skimps,

Edith Penn shall have the prize, for she has kept within moderate limits, and yet gives interesting details. Masjorie Heard and Doroth Powell win Mention and also Frances Corbett



Yvonne Martin.

New Members awaiting your Welcome

I told you last month about Percy (age 12) Claude (age 10), and Allan Martin (age 6 having joined our rank in New Zealand. Ver soon after I had writte the post brought the coupons, and also one from their sister Alice. who is 15. We shall look for jolly letters from such a family party, and hope they

will interest their chums. Alice writes:

" I have been reading a QUIVER which I got from my grandfather, and I saw the lovely Scheme the you had. I hope you will not mind having me as Companion. I noticed that there were a number of Companions in New Zealand.

Hilda Phillipson (age 10; Forest Gate) s introduced by Dora Stewart.

Dorothy Armstrong (age 12; Newcastle on-Tyne) is Maud's sister. She says:

"I will work as hard as I can to get as multimoney as possible for the bazaar which Maud a telling you about. I think it is lovely being able to the state of the keep four children, and I hope we shall be able to add

Norah Coxon (age 16) writes to me thus

" For a good many months now I have wants to join," she says, "as my friend Mand Amstrachas often told me about it, and I have also reisome of the letters in Thi Quiver. I have been a England now four years, but before that I lived a months; then we are sufficiently as the property of the letters in England staying stroughts then we are some like the property of the propert months; then we are going back with her.

COMPANIONSHIP CHRISTMAS PAGES

James Jardine (age $15\frac{1}{2}$) is a new member in South Africa. And John C. M. Els (age 23) is another.

Robert Quartey (age 18) joins us in West Airica.

Lettie Doig (age 14) is an addition to our membership in South Australia; her first letter makes me think she will be an excellent correspondent.

Florence Legg (age 11½) joins our numbers in Victoria. She lives 140 miles north-east of Melbourne. Letters, please, "Flossie."

Yet another Australian new-comer is *Cyril A*, *Young* (age 16; Brunswick West), and from him also we shall watch for news.

A Christmas Bazaar for our Fund

"We have decided to have a bazaar," writes Maud Armstrong from Newcastle-on-Tyne, "Norah, and Dolly and I, and I am going to ask another friend and her sister if they will help. We expect to have it about Christmas time, and mother has given me permission to have it in our house. We will ask ladies to order things—table-centres, cushion covers, etc.—and then make them, but, of course, they won't get their things until the day of the sale, when they will all be on view."

That was splendid news, Maud, and we hope that sale will be a first-rate success. Are any photographs

to be taken?

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A Few Notes on Companions' Letters

Dolores Kirkley (Australia) wrote an interesting account of a typical day in her busy office.

Dorothy Powell re-

"I am sending my subscription (7s. 6d.) for 'Our Four,' as I promised last month. I sn't it just lovely to say our four? And just as lovely as to say four. Four scens a very small number in arithmetic, when we deal in millions, and that sort of thing; but it is a big number when one is talking of human

children, when they are supported by the unselfishness of other human children and 'young grown-ups.'"

Essyllt Prichard's entertaining letter about her holiday adventures ends thus:

"I am very glad the Corner is making such progress. I hope, when we remember the fifth birthday, we can mention our five protegés. Nesta and I cuclose a P.O. for 2s. 6d. Wishing our Corner' Many Happy Returns —and great success. Your loving Companion."

Dora Stewart sent her regular subscription and said:

"I am going to try hard to get some new Companions. That is a very good simile of Helen Gilmer's, 'the Chain of Love.' I think it is a splendid thought of hers."

Nesta Prichard gives me her photograph.

"We spent some of our holidays," she notes, "at Pwllheli, which is very near Criccieth, the home of Mr. Lloyd George, and enjoyed the change immensely. I am very keen on French; about six or seven take it in our school. We study it instead of Welsh. I like to study languages more than anything else in school."

D. Jean Best enclosed 9s. 6d., the proceeds of her last "Violet Magazine."

"In August," she says, "we were at Aboyne, up Deeside. The hills were all purple with heather. It was looking most beautiful. I found white heather one day. It was a beautiful afternoon the day we climbed Carmaferg, and the view from the top was just splendid, and all the mountains were so clear. I am sending you a tiny piece of the white heather I found, to bring the Corner good luck at its birthday time."

That was the second gift of white heather at our "birthday time," for Gladys West sent me a lovely spray from Aviemore; so, if the old belief is true, we ought to have a most lucky year this year. Oh, Jean also thinks the "Special Effort Day" splendid!

I will tell you my idea about it in our March Corner.

"I enclose a P.O. for two and sixpence, which was given me by mother for helping her during the holidays,"

writes Lucy Kirkley in her opening sentence,

" and I have received the pendant safely, for which I thank you. Mother bought me a silver chain for it. The badge is very pretty. Such a lot of persons ask me what the letters 'Q.C.' mean, and, of course, I tell them."

Gladys West makes this remark:

Tom at the back. "I do not believe I have written to you since the joyful news came to us of our new protégé."

Doris Trott tells me that she is

"ever so glad to hear that we have another little boy to help. I wish we could do as Madge Williams says, and try to have a 'Special Effort Day.' Don't you think we might? This summer I went to a little easide village called Croyde. We had lovely weather —only one or two spots of rain all the time."

Helen Strong also went to Croyde, and



Marie, Josephine, and Mona Lihou in Fancy Dress.
Their wee brother Tom at the back.

THE QUIVER

speaks of its charms in a happy letter. She is busy studying domestic economy.

Phyllis Brissenden wrote an interesting letter about some flying-machine adventures she had been watching.

Kathleen Moyle's letter contains a lot of facts about the Isle of Man, and she promises a letter concerning its traditions and superstitions—" if I am interested." I am, Kathleen, and shall look for the letter soon.

The "Sytchampton Miscellany," which Isabel Young runs in the interests of our Fund, has prospered well and has fifty-eight subscribers. I have seen one number of it, and congratulate its editor. A serial story, riddles, household hints, recipes, are included, and a lot of work must have been given to its editor.

A long letter from our old friend Jeannie Forbes was one of my pleasures during the month.

Kathleen Collver (Canada), Dorothy Lim (China), Winsome Marsh (so delightful to hear again from you, Winsome), Hettie Joubert (South Africa), Kathleen Segré (Jamaica), Freda Cartwright, Arthur Aylward, Kate and Ethel Edwards, Essie Daley (Australia), Eunice Taylor (New Zealand), Laura Jago, and Madge Williams are among the senders of letters to whom my thanks are also due,

The New Competition

Will you each enter for this? Think about a favourite character, either in history or one who is living to-day; write a description of him (or her), his work, interests, characteristics, etc., in not more than 200 words then write at the foot—for my information—the name of the person described, and you own name, address, and age. You may set in more than one character if you wish, but not more than three. There will be pine for the best Character Sketches sent in and afterwards a Guessing Competition.

Then I offer special prizes for the bestetters that reach me not later that January 1st, on:

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" A Special Effort Day for the Violet Fund"

How and when you would suggest sad a day should be celebrated, and any othe thoughts you may have on the matte should be given. And not more than a words, please—on one side only of the page

Believe me to be, with all affectionate greetings,
Your Companion friend,

Please study our balance sheet carefully and let us see how much of the tweny guineas required for Philip can be raised by the 31st of this month.

"THE QUIVER" COMPANIONSHIP FUNDS

The following is	our acco	unt	from	Ti	ilv	ist	to end of September, 1913.	
				1	5.	d.		1 8. 6
Brought forward				3	11	5	Peggie Allan	
Dora Stewart	* *	**	* *		2	(1)	Heriot Hughes	0
A. Bateman			* ×		5	4.7	Thomas Cameron	2
Frances M. Boston					1	15	Mrs. McCash	
Clarice Hillon	2.2	**			2	10	Charlie McCash	
Anonym					3	63	Frances Corbett	1
Mr. W. S. Bryce (Car.	iada)	+ 4		1	13	13	Allie and Jean Maclean and Morag	
Bertha Tyrrell		* *			1	13:	McDonald	1 1
Enid and Ida Jones			**		5	0	Marie Da Costa (Jamaica)	2
Dorothy L. S. Lim (C	hina)	* *			2	4.3	Daisy Da Costa (Januarez)	1
Lucille Escottery (Jan	1411-11				1	63	Kathleen and Dorothy Collyer (Canada)	4
Anonymous					5	41	Jean Best	Q
William A. Laidlaw					2	fy	Essylt and Nesta Prichard	2
Mrs. Gregory					1	12	Jeanie, Ethe and Mary Forbes	
Frances Corbett	* *				1	0	Lucy Kirkley	-
Emily M. Pretsell						(1)	Edith Penn	2
Luzzie Palmer (St. Lu	cht. B.W.	1.)					Dorothy P. Powell	- 1
Irene and Ere King-	Furner				2	11	Maggie Gillespie	2
Ivy M. Slesser (New).	Zealand)				1	0	Kathleen L. Segre (Januarca)	1
Trene Collier (New Ze-	aland)					13		_
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HELP IN SHOPPING

A New Department to Assist Readers

By THE EDITOR

A STORY which appeared in one of the magazines a short time ago told of a young lady who did not know what to do for a livelihood. After thinking of several conventional openings for women workers she finally conceived the idea of acting as a professional shopper.

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ition.

She knew that a great many people are not experts in buying, and that a great many more have not the time or opportunity to make the best of shopping, so she hired herself out at so much an hour to different people, and by a combination of knowledge, taste and tact worked up a successful career.

So much for the story. I do not know if the idea has ever been tried in real life, but I do know that there are a great many people who do their shopping under considerable disadvantages. I remember years ago, when I had more time and less money, being in want of a suit case for my annual holiday. I went to no less than a dozen of the leading London establishments, worried scores of assistants, and inspected hundreds of articles, finally purchasing a really cheap and durable article at — (but of course I must not mention the name of the firm!).

Finding the Right Place

That case has served me for many years, and was a bargain. But there are very few people who could go to all that trouble in the matter. People living in country districts find it especially difficult at times to buy just what they want, and at a reasonable price. Dress cases, of course, one could order from a dozen firms, but many times one is in need of an unusual article, and it is a matter of considerable difficulty even to discover a firm dealing in that particular commodity.

Reading the story I have mentioned, and recalling the correspondence of readers and the difficulties of friends, set me thinking. The result has been that I have made arrangements to start a new

department to help QUIVER readers in their shopping.

I think there must be hundreds of readers who occasionally have need of some expert assistance in their shopping. Perhaps you live in the country or in one of the Colonies, or abroad, and are disinclined to order goods from mere lists; or perhaps you are unable to trace the maker of some particular article which you require. If you had a trustworthy friend in the city you would write to him, and he would take a taxi round from place to place and try to discover the thing you wanted. Failing that you are in a difficulty.

"The Quiver" Buying Expert

To help such I have made arrangements for the assistance of an expert whose business it is to buy, and whose work necessitates his knowing all there is to know about shops. His services I am able to put at the disposal of readers of The Quiver, without fee of any sort. He will undertake to advise you where to procure an article, or will, if you so desire, purchase it at the lowest possible price and have it dispatched to your address.

Let it be clearly understood; our buyer is not interested in any one particular firm—or any number of firms for that matter—that he desires to push in competition with some rival. He will conscientiously recommend what he thinks will best suit your case, even though it means trouble in the discovering of some out-of-the-way manufacturer or dealer.

Those wishing for help of this description should write to the BUYING EXPERT, THE QUIVER Home Department, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C. A stamped addressed envelope should be enclosed for reply, and if it is desired to send any remittances, cheques or postal orders can be made payable to Messrs. Cassell and Co., Ltd., thus ensuring the safe transit of money.

FOR CHRISTMAS PRESENTS

Some Books "With the Season's Compliments"

THE problem of Christmas presents does not grow easier as the years advance. It would be comparatively easy to offer a philosophy of the subject, but it is more practical instead to make a few suggestions, and that along one line only.

Books are acceptable presents for "all sorts and conditions of men," besides women and children, and, if only a little care is exercised, they will give more satisfaction than a variety of more expensive mementoes.

"Everyday Life in the Holy Land"

For Sunday School teachers, and all interested in the Bible, I can imagine no more useful and handsome gift-book than the Rev. J. Neil's "Everyday Life in the Holy Land" (Messrs, Cassell and Co., Ltd.: 7s. 6d. net). It is an exquisitely beautiful volume, published at about a third of the price at which first editions of such works have hitherto been issued, and, with its 32 full-page coloured illustrations, it illumines thousands of passages in the Bible, bringing new light on all sorts of manners and customs in the East. The Archbishop of Canterbury writes about this volume, "It will, I am certain, be of genuine service to parents and teachers everywhere if they have the capacity to realise the vivid touch which has been given both to pictures and letterpress-a touch not of fancy but of fact."

Home and Foreign

For those who are troubled about some of the religious and social problems of the day, Dr. Garvie's new book, "Can We Still Follow Jesus?" (Cassell: 1s. 6d. net) will Time as an inspiration and help; whilst all interested in foreign missions—as well as those interested in the Civil Service and the Empire-will find Dr. Horton's "Three Months in India " (Cassell: 2s. 6d. net) a valuable contribution to an important sub-

"Sketches from Nature"

For an artistic friend it would be difficult to find a more appropriate gift than "Sketches from Nature," by John Mac-Whirter, R.A. (Cassell: 6s, net), This consists of a collection of 23 colour a speech 24 pencil sketches, made, for the me survey part, in this great artist's best inspirative treatment atmospheres Italy and Scotland. 15 "It MacWhirter contributes a very inform tubercu introduction, and a portrait of the are their co by Sir Hubert von Herkomer, C.V.O., R. For a serves as a frontispiece.

"The Ring and the Book"

For the Browning lover there is a make u pleasure in store in Sir Frederick Ires trial. new work, "The Country of the Ring in its the Book " (Cassell: 15s. net). Sir Freder profess first gives the story, from the facts discove remedy in "the old yellow book," then goes after a the ground point by point in a sec certain that co "The Country of the Story," finally deal would with "The People of the Story as comes appear in the Poem." As a comment infection on Browning's great poem, this work still on masterpiece, the clear, lucid telling be have to greatly helped by the hundred illustrate brillian photographs taken by the author his rem various seasons of the year, for the have be part at or about the actual date in : see them part at or about the actual date in been my calendar on which occurred the eps been my are prac with which the particular scene is associate must be

For Boys and Girls

For boys of a mechanical turn of mintal inhalant I can strongly recommend "All Ale medical Engineering," by Gordon D. Knox (Case offer ma Engineering," by Gordon D. Knox (case wife was tos.). It is a fascinating story of the trim treatmen of the human mind over the forces of natt curable t "The British Boy's Annual" and "I Brompton British Girl's Annual" (Cassell: 58, or The Time containing stories and articles, with color Space and other illustrations of all kinds following marvels of cheapness, "Cassell's Am spondence for Boys and Cirls " (3s. od.) is for your children, and a veritable marvel of delly following

For the schoolgirl "Enter Patricia," is Suppri E. E. Cowper, will be deemed a "rippin the Open book, whilst " Do-Well and Do-Little," Lynton I book, whilst "Do-wen and Shorter, "Colone Dora Sigerson (Mrs. Clement Shorter, "When lovely fairy story for the little people.

Finally, may I just suggest THE QUI Countess Annual Volume (7s. od.) as a gift-book fited very everyone? With over 1,100 pages, met that about 600 illustrations, it affords rea-their vill matter for months.

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THE MEDICAL CONGRESS AND THE CURE OF CONSUMPTION

Dr. H. W. G. Mackenzie, consulting physician to the Brompton Hospital for Consumption, in his olour speech at the Congress in which he gave a general the survey of the history and results of the tuberculin spiration treatment, discredited its reliability in the treatment of phthisis in the following words:
nd. \(\mathbb{h} \) "It is for those who have strong faith in

infort tuberculin as a cure for tuberculosis to make out the are their case. I speak as one not without experience. the are their case. I speak as offer the are their case. I speak as offer the speak as the used tuberculin in a large number of cases. I have used extract and endoplasm. I have given it orally and subcutaneously. I have given it at longer and shorter taneously. I have given it at longer and shorter intervals. I have given it in repeated small doses I have given it in gradually increasing doses. is a me have used it because I felt it ought to have a full k Tree trial. Among those who have expressed their belief Ring in its usefulness are men of high standing in the Frede profession both in this country and abroad. With Frede similar testimony as to the effects of any other discove remedy I should feel it my duty to use it. But goes after all the trials I have made I still feel uncertain as to the value of tuberculin. I do not feel a sec that confidence in the value of tuberculin which ly deal would justify me in saying to every patient that as to comes to me with tuberculosis without secondar mmer infection that I have a remedy in tuberculin which work! still on its trial. When all is said and done, we ing be have to acknowledge that the results so far are not ustrat brilliant, certainly not convincing."

It is very remarkable that the speaker concluded author his remarks by saying: "I hear of cures said to the have been effected in private practice. I want to I want to te in see them reproduced in our hospitals. There have been much theorising and talk. What is needed are practical proofs; deeds, not words." He surely must be aware that practical proof was the very one thing Dr. E. W. Alabone asked for when he made application to the Brompton Hospital, offer ing to attend the patients, supply his inhaler and inhalants free of cost, and let a committee of all Ab medical men judge the results. Not only was this (Case offer made, but Colonel Le Poer Trench, whose e trim wife was cured of consumption by Dr. Alabone's treatment, after being pronounced absolutely in-curable by the late Sir W. Broadbent, promised the nd "I Brompton Hospital Li.000 if the offer was accepted.

The Times opened its columns to a long correspond-

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5s. eac ence in connection with this generous offer Space does not permit us to give more than the ands following brief extracts from this lengthy corres Am spondence, but any medical man or layman desiring fully to acquaint himself with practical proof. r youn not words only, should obtain from the author the not words only, should obtain from the author be delig following books: "How the Cure of Consumption rick," is Suppressed" (price 1s.), and "Facts Regarding ripps the Open-air Treatment" (price 1s.). These can be obtained, post free, from Dr. E. W. Alabone, which is the property of the price of the pric

ittle, Lynton House, Highbury Quadrant, London, N.
rter). Colonel Le Poer Trench writes as follows:

"When my wife was undergoing the 'treatment' I heard that a Mr. Theobald—the brother of the Countess of Stamford—had some years since bene--hoos fited very much by the 'Treatment,' so, when I ges, met that lady. I asked her how her family came to place her brother under it. She told me that in s real their village in Hampshire there was a family consisting of father, mother, and three sons—fine young men! That the father died of consumption, and each of the brothers, on attaining the age of twenty, was attacked in turn; that with the two eldest it ended fatally, but when it came to the turn of the third, her family—who in the meantime had heard of the Alabone cure—wrote to that gentleman, and asked if he could do anything for the sufferer; that Mr. Alabone undertook the case and cured it; and that it was this incident which gave her family the confidence to place her brother under the treatment. She added that this occurred some ten years ago, and that he is still in the enjoyment of good health."

It seems that, however much the facts may be needed, they are the last thing accepted when opposed to long-standing theories, but when the claims made by Dr. Alabone are supported by an array of facts, substantiated by medical men, nurses, and cured patients in all professions and classes, it is impossible to ignore their claim to our most earnest consideration, the more so in view of the failure, admitted at the Medical Congress, of the many "treatments" which have fallen so lamentably short in arresting the ravages of consumption

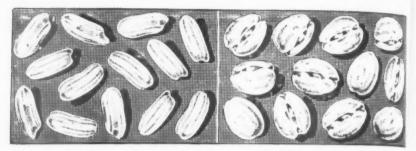
The testimony of medical men is, perhaps, the more convincing, especially if they themselves have been the victims of phthisis. A most remarkable case is that of J. Christian, M.D., M.R.C.S., A most remark-R.N., who was dismissed the Service, being in consumption. After trying other treatments from well-known specialists, he came to Dr. Alabone, when his condition was apparently hopeless, with cavities in the lungs. He was perfectly restored to health, and started to practise his profession.

Another well-known physician (Dr. C---) sent for Dr. Alabone in consultation in a case of phthisis in its last stage; the patient had two large cavities, - informed Dr. Alabone it was really and Dr. C-Alabone in consultation in many other cases, the majority of which responded to his treatment, regaining their health and remaining cured. great point in this treatment is the permanency

A well-known medical officer of health, whose on had previously been treated by two specialists, gradually worse, decided to place him but got Dr. Alabone's inhalation treatment, which he did, with the happiest results; he perfectly regained his health, and after being cured for five years, married, and is still as well as ever he An immense number of such cases could be was. quoted, but these will suffice.

The same satisfactory reports are received from nurses who have been at sanatoria and seen the results of open-air treatment as contrasted with that of Dr. Alabone's.

In addition to the works previously mentioned, we would advise any reader desirous of obtaining we would advise any reader actions of obtaining the best possible information on this subject to read "The Cure of Consumption, Asthma, Bronchitis, and Other Diseases of the Chest," by Edwin W. Alabone, M.D. Phil., D.Sc., ex M.R.C.S. Eng., Lynton House, Highbury Quadrant, London, N. Illustrated by numerous cases pronounced incurable by the most eminent physicians. Forty-seventh Edition. One hundred and seventy-first thousand. Price 2s. 6d., post free, of the Author.



Puffed Rice-7d. per packet.

Puffed Wheat-6d. per packet,

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Have you Tried these Enticing Foods?

The name may suggest nothing to you, but once you try Puffed Rice and Puffed Wheat you and the children will be as delighted as other people are.

For these are delicious foods: unlike anything else you have ever tasted.

Mammoth crisp grains, with their coats unbroken; ready to eat, without cooking or trouble; readily digested and so porous that they melt in the mouth.

Hearty foods and satisfying —good with milk, cream or fruit, at any meal. Excellent between meals because they form less tax on digestion than any other cereal food.

The whole family will enjoy Puffed Rice and Puffed Wheat and thrive upon them.

Foods shot from Guns

WONDERFUL METHOD OF COOKING

They are made by this curious process: the whole rice or wheat kernels are put into bronze-metal guns. The guns are scaled, then revolved in specially constructed ovens heated to over 550 degrees. The heat turns the moisture in the grain to steam, and the pressure becomes terrific. Then the guns are fired off. In-stantly

every starch granu'e in the grain is blasted into a myriad particles. The kernel of grain is expanded eight to ten times its original size. Yet the coat is unbroken; each kernel is shaped as before. It is now perfectly cooked, far more digestible than bread and ready to be eaten. Serve as directed on packets. Sold by Grocers everywhere.

If any difficulty in obtaining either of these nourishing foods, send us your name and address on a post-card and we will see you are supplied. QUAKER OATS LTD., FINSBURY SQUARE, LONDON, E.C.

THE CRUTCH AND KINDNESS LEAGUE

By the Rev. J. REID HOWATT

Scraping Down Christmas

REGRET to mark the dimming light of Oliver Wendell Holmes. There was a time (for cautious reasons we shall not specify it more particularly) when no young man counted his library even decently equipped unless "The Autocrat of the Breakfast Table" beamed luminously on the shelves. But one rarely sees it now, though when it is found it is sure to be I count it for a choice well-thumbed. treasure in my heart that I was once in the author's company-no tall, lean Yank, but a little man, fair to look upon, albeit somewhat replete, brisk in movement, with the quick, observant eve of the doctor. The eyes were most of the time twinkling with humour, though there were occasions when they were very grave. It was clear to all that here was one of broad human sympathies, yet withal a man of kindliest earnestness,

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The Thing which Breaks Down

Dipping, for the hundredth time, into "The Autocrat" lately, I came across some lines which not only reveal the man in both qualities of his heart, but also give some explanation of why he is not read so much now as once he was; this, but more besides.

"Little of all we value here
Wakes on the morn of its hundredth year
Without both feeling and looking queer.
In fact, there's nothing that keeps its youth,
So far as I know, but a tree and a truth.
(This is a moral that runs at large;
Take it. You're welcome. No extra charge)."

I do take it, not because of the cheapness of the offer, or even the cordial invitation, but because of the thought which has been so well expressed in the writer's characteristic way. It points the finger at an irritant we all know and deplore, but rarely philosophise about. I mean the strange and almost magical way things have of slipping from us: what we call attrition. In the same poem, "The One-Hoss Shay," O. W. H. puts the moral of the matter into a nutshell when he says:

"Now in building of chaises, I tell you what, There is always somewhere a weakest spot— In hub, tire, felloe, in spring or thill, In panel, or crossbar, or floor, or sill, In screw, bolt, thoroughbrace—lurking still, Find it somewhere you must and will—Above or below, or within or without—And that's the reason, beyond a doubt, A chaise breaks down, but doesn't wear out."

This is just the trouble; at some turn on the way we suddenly are brought face to face with the fact that something we had long trusted in and loved has broken down. When the springtime came we had to keep abreast of Nature's latest modes in freshness, and so donned the new suit, with the natty boots and the natty hat, and felt ready to accept any invitation; but one grey day it was miserably forced upon us that these things of beauty were not joys for ever, and, reluctantly, they had to be discarded.

Saved by the Children

Is it the fate that is overtaking our longcherished Christmas? Noël is not the Noël it was. There are still the carols, but they begin with the November fogs and have little significance for anybody except the girl who answers the door. Weeks later and we sally out on a bracing night to see what decorations the shops are making, but have only our healthy glow for a reward. Later still, and it sounds like a sweet hymn to hear from the pulpit the dear old request for holly, ivy, flowers and volunteers to decorate the church, and we piously trust there will be a bountiful response-and then forget all about it. We consult the mails-to find they have left us no time for those nice long letters we meant to write to the dear ones far away: we must buy some cards. So the attrition goes on.

Blessed be the children! But for them this wearing out of the most beautiful festival on earth would by this time have been a complete break down. The bairns are the brakes, the oil, the repair here and the replacement there, which keep the chaise still running. This corroding work is not wilful; he knows little of human nature who speaks of it as a sign of spiritual degeneracy; it is simply the raw inability of people to keep their youth in its outward expression. But behind it all the youth is



Puffed Rice-7d. per packet.

Puffed Wheat-6d. per packet.

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still there, and one even younger than youth, for, snuggled somewhere in the heart of every man or woman worthy to be called a man or woman, there lies the little brother or sister-the tiny being these grown-ups were once themselves. And this turns their thoughts in special kindness at this season to the little ones outside themselves. Do what they may, the older ones can't believe in Father Christmas stuffing the stockings with toys, but they are glad to believe the children believe it, and they wouldn't for the world disabuse their glorious faith; that would be rankest heresy to them-

The children have their visions of this season; all children have, and especially poor ones. There are traditions that are handed down from child to child-like hopscotch, peg-tops, hoops, skipping-ropes, pea-shooters and marbles-of which no grown person could give, off-hand, the proper seasons, or quote the rules concerning them which were laid down by the ancient Medes and Persians; yet every child knows these, even the poorest and most lonely. How it is all done I cannot guess; I take it to be like the mysterious way news can fly in India and Africa among natives, without visible signals or wireless flightsmysteries strictly restricted to select and chosen souls. But the poorest child scents Christmas from afar, and the smell is to him as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed, the smell of fir-trees laden with dolls in gayest raiment, the smell of plum-puddings which stick lovingly to the ribs, of crackers that bang like young earthquakes, fires that really do warm the room, and never a grumpy face anywhere.

Is it to be so, I wonder, with all my childcripples this Christmas? Puir wee mites! my heart yearns over them. They are a big family-over 12,000 in London aloneand during twelve months of the year, all but a fraction, their times are sad and lonesome enough in all conscience. For, being cripples, they know nothing of the joy of running about with others, and getting into scrapes, as all sound and healthy children do, and must do; the chief event of their lives is when they are taken to hospital or are taken back, and that can hardly be called a child's frolic. Their parents love them warmly, and they love their parents, but father and mother are poor and can do so little in the way of giving even instalments towards childhood's dreams.

Every member of the Crutch-and-Kindness League writes a letter once a month at least to the poor cripple assigned him for that purpose. This is the backbone of the League. But at a time like Christmas, and for such an object-the gladdening of these wee maimed ones-others besides members will, I am sure, do what they can to make the Day of the Child be a happy day to small suffering ones. Any donations, then, large or small, which may be sent for this purpose, will be gratefully received and acknowledged by Sir John Kirk, J.P., Director and Secretary, Ragged School Union, 32 John Street, Theobald's Road, London, W.C., from whom may also be received, for a stamp, all details of the Crutch-and-Kindness League.

NEW MEMBERS FOR THE MONTH

Miss Kathleen F. Browne, Colchester, Essex.
Miss Dorothy Chapman, Standon, Herts; Mr.
Arthur Charlton, Astley, Lanes.
Miss Ada Evans, Quebec, Canada.
Miss Jenny Francis, Waterloo, Liverpool; Miss Frances A. Freet, Arnesby, Leicester; Miss Mabel Furze, Minchead, Somerset.
Mrs. Goodman, Alvechurch, Wores.
Miss J. P. Hancock, Heswall, Cheshire; Miss Joyce Harris, Natal, South Africa; Miss Rose Harty, St. Ann's, Jamaica; Mrs. W. Haste, Levin, New Zealand; Miss Grace Hibling, Fen Ditton, Cambs; Miss N. Hodgson, Godden Green, near Sevenoaks; Master Ambrose Hooper, South Lawestoft.

Miss N. Hodgson, Godden Green, near sevenosas, Master Ambrose Hooper, South Lawestoft.
Miss Eva Jackson, Melton Mowbray, Leiester;
Miss Ey, M. Jackson, Bury St. Edmund's, Suffolk;
Miss Lily Jackson, Huddersfield, Yorks;
Mr. Abel
Johnson, Barbados, B.W.L.
Johnson, Karty, Miss Julie

Miss Mildred Lawson, Eltham, Kent; Miss Julie

Miss Mildred Lawson, Eltham, Kent; Miss Julie Limann, Weybridge, Surrey.
Miss McDonald, Dunblane, N.B.
Miss D. J. L. Oliphant, Shrewton, Wilts.
Miss B. L. Salisbury, Nelson, New Zealand; Mrs.
Scargill, Hexthorpe, Yorks; Master Eric Smith,
Dunedin, New Zealand: Miss Jessie E. Smith,
Leederville, West Australia.
Miss Rose White, Otago, New Zealand; Miss
Vera Wood, Auckland, New Zealand.
Miss G. A. Winter, Miss Ruby Ellis, Christchurch,
New Zealand. (Group 199.)
Miss Flossie Mansfield, Miss Hilda Dryden, Welling-

Miss Flossie Mansfield, Miss Hilda Dryden, Welling-

Miss Flossie Mansfield, Miss Hilda Dryden, wenns-ton, New Zealand.

Misses Mildred and Edna Sowman, Miss Irene Tovey, Blenheim, New Zealand. (Group 27.)

Miss Queenie Bates, Miss Rosalind Binnie, Miss Elste Coates, Miss Nellie Hamilton, Miss Bessie Park, Miss Rene Shepherd, Misses Lilhan and Olive Shrimp-ton, Miss Nellie Thompson, Roslyn, Dunedin, New

ton, Miss Nellie Thompson, Rosiyn, Duncam, Res Zealand. (Group 128.) Miss Grace Jenkins, Miss Muriel Taylor, Miss Winnie Comor, Miss Margaret Stooke, Miss Emily Tiplady, Miss Madge Barrett, Miss Edith Haigh, Miss Alice French, Miss Marjorie Henshall, Miss Mayis Allum, Miss Marion Lambert, Miss Leone Le Boucher, Fulneck Girls' School, near Leeds. (Group 130.)

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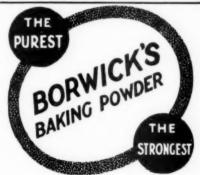
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LESSON MATERIAL

Sunday School Pages for December

By the Rev. RICHARD ROBERTS

WE have seen that the Sunday School can only secure an ideal atmosphere by a process of grading the scholars and segregating them into departments according to their developing periods. We shall see that in the interests of educational efficiency some such differentiation in the arrangement of teaching material is equally

The staple of our teaching material is the Bible. I use the word " staple " because it would be a short-sighted policy to make the Bible our sole repository of teaching material. We have to prevent the pupil from thinking of Christianity merely as an affair of ancient documents. He should see it as a living force to-day, with centuries of vital history behind it, a continuous stream across the ages. We must therefore supplement the Biblical material with lessons drawn from post-Bibl cal Christian biography and history. Nor must we forget that (in the ear ier stages especially) we have a priceless asset for religious education in God's manifestation of Himself in Nature. Nevertheless the main actual source of our teaching material (and the background of it all) is the Bible.

Arranging Material

But we know quite well that the Bible is not equally suited in all its parts for all stages of development. We could hardly introduce Amos or Acts xvii. or Romans v. into the infants' department. We therefore need so to arrange our material that it shall fall appropriately to the different periods of growth. In the past we have done so roughly, and where the arrangement has not been satisfactory we have sought to overcome the difficulty by a "graded" treatment of the lesson. What we have wanted, however, has been a scheme of "graded lessons," that is an arrangement of Bible passages which will cover the whole Bible, but which will also appoint appropriate cycles of lessons for each developing

Child-study has given us the clue to this problem. It has analysed the mental pro-

cesses of the child, and we know now with tolerable accuracy what the kind of mental provender is that the child can assimilate at various stages of its growth. It is not necessary that we should define these stages in detail, but it will help us to appreciate the nature of our problem if we recall two or three main features of the development.

The child up to the end of the eighth year of life or thereabout-let us remember, however, that for our purposes we reckon only with children from four to eight years of age can assimilate only the simplest kind of short story; and for this period the short stories of the Bible, and talks about the most familiar objects of the child's experience, practically constitute the relevant teaching material. It must, however, be held in mind that the child's mental capacity and agility increase rapidly, and more complex stories-stories with swift, dramatic movement in them, wonder storie; and the like -are called for and must be provided in the later years of infancy and early childhood.

Beyond the eighth year the outstanding feature in development is the awakening consciousness of personality. The child consequently becomes interested in the personality of other people, and the mental hunger must therefore be largely biographical, a circumstance which leads at last to that hero worship which is the main characteristic of the close of this period.

In early adolescence this biographical interest broadens out into a more general interest in history—in the course of events; and after the first stage in adolescence a still broader interest in causes and principles makes its appearance.

The Four Stages

We may therefore lay down as the governing factors in our selection of lesson materials according to the stages of growth;

Stage 1.—The Simple Story.

Stage 2.—Biographical.

Stage 3.-Historical.

Stage 4.-Didactic.

We have four clear and scientifically reached points of view for the arrangement of the Biblical matter.

The grading of lesson material has been for some time a real need and a subject of experiment. In America a graded s heme has been in operation for some years, but it is far too elaborate and threatens to collapse beneath its own cumbrousness. In this country a scheme has been evolved by a body of scholars and experts in Sunday School work, which bids fair to supply the need. It is called the "Standard Course," and it is to be had from the Sunday School Union, Ludgate Hill, E.C. It has been drawn up in accordance with the principles which we have been trying to outline above and it is intended to come into operation on the first Sunday of 1914.

Perhaps we shall best illustrate the idea of graded lessons, and at the same time commend this particular scheme, by setting down the first month's lessons in each case:

1. The Primary Course, Children of 6 8 years.

4. - Jesus Calling the Fishermen (Luke v. 1-11), " 11. Jesus Stilling the Storm (Luke vin.

18. Jesus Healing Ten Lepers (Luke xvii.

25. - Jesus Blessing the Children (Luke xviii. 15-17).

In each case there is a corresponding Nature talk provided for, e.g. January 11th, "The Wind." These are all, it will be noticed, simple stories.

2. The Junior Course, -9 11 years.

JAN. 4.—The Birth of John (Luke i. 5-25, 57-86), "11.—The Birth of Jesus (Luke i. 2-38; ii. 1-38), "18.—The Wise Men from the East (Matt. ii.), "25.—The Boyhoud of Jesus (Luke ii. 30-52).

Here clearly the emphasis is biographical.

3. THE INTERMEDIATE COURSE, -12-14

[Av. 4. The Childhood of Jesus (Luke ii.).
 ii. The Voice in the Wilderness (Mark i. r-8).
 iii. The Beloved Son (Mark i. 9. 18).

25. Master and Disciples (Mark i. 16-20).

The compilers of the course have quite evidently endeavoured to produce the impression that we are studying the beginning of a great historical movement. In dealing with the Gospels, the major emphasis must always lie upon the figure of Jesus Himself; but here He is being set out in the light of the vast historical process which He initiated.

4. The Senior Course, -16-18 years. The general subject of the first part of this course is the teaching of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels,

JAN. 4.—The Synoptic Gospels: The Authors and their Common Warry (Matt. ix, 9-1), Mark ii, 13-17; etc.). 11. The Ministry of Jesus (Mark i. 14, 15, 2);

etc.). 18.—The Character of Jesus (Mark i. 12 3/1

11. 10, 11: etc.).
25.—The Miracles of Jesus (Mark v. 17-20)
vii. 28, 2): etc.).

We have passed now into the region of general characteristics and teaching the period when general discussion of topics a to be welcomed, and it is clear that the syllabus aims at stimulating thought upon the general principles which underlie the story of Christian origins.

It is to be noticed that the fifteenth year is apparently not provided for. The reason is simply that that is regarded as the critical period for spiritual awakening, and a special course is arranged for that year, "dealing with Decision, Duty, and Discipline." The first month is as follows:

JAN. 4. Abraham (ten. 81, 1 o), 11. Moses (Ex. 10, 1 14), 18. Samuel (t Sam, 10,), 25. The Disaples (Matt. iv. 18 22; John b

Fru. 1 .- Paul (Acts ix. 1-19).

Then follow series on "The Great Choice" "The New Birth," and kindred topics, the intention being to lead the class member to face directly the duty of embracing the Christian life.

It was felt that the Primary Course required an introduction, and for the younger children a special beginners' course has been arranged. The point of this series may be gathered from the simplicity of the first month's lessons

Jan. 4 The Naturing of the Buby Leave, 11. The Presentation in the Lemple, 12. The Star of the Wise Men. 12. The Flight into Expt.

It would hardly be fair to judge the whole scheme from the examples here given; but it may be stated without hesitation that, while there may be need of revision and alteration in detail, in general this system of Graded Lessons meets the present urgent need; and they who have a care for the Sunday School and for the children will make every effort to secure its adoption in what quarter soever they may have influ-

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That "do things" in every walk of life nowadays are directed by the keen brains of men and women who have built themselves into fit condition to win.

To-day's food must repair the used-up cells in muscle, brain and nerve, caused by yesterday's work.

If you care to be "quite fit" for to-morrow, see to it that the food contains the elements Nature requires to do her marvellous rebuilding.

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There are no fees, but those requiring any information must enclose 6d. Postal Order (which should be crossed), and a stamped envelope, when a reply will be sent them by post. Address all communications to "Winifred," THE QUIVER Office, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.

BUSINESSES THAT CAN BE WORKED FROM HOME

It often surprises me that so many people seem to possess talents to a greater or lesser degree, and at the same time seem quite incapable of turning those talents to any real account. There are exquisite needlewomen who seem content to earn a few shillings occasionally, but who hardly appear to realise that they really have in their possession a gift that should make them independent did they but use it in the right way.

Then, too, some chance remark, or some unlooked-for opportunity, will often suggest to the woman of talent a way in which she can use her gifts in some permanently useful manner. The line between the badly-paid amateur and the well-paid professional is but a thin one, provided the real talent is there, whatever it may be, although joined to that talent must be certain business qualities without which money-making is an impossibility. Amongst these may be mentioned punctuality, reliability, and energy.

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I had an instance brought before me of the ways of the incurable amateur quite recently. A lady wanted a certain kind of collar worked, and I put her in communication with a worker who did this kind of thing. Some time afterwards I heard from the worker that she had not by her a collar of the kind, so she sent something else, and, naturally, lost the order. What apparently had not occurred to her was that if she sat up the best part of the night to supply the order it would be better than sending something quite different.

Then, again, I recently had a letter from a correspondent who complains that she has not had an order lately—she does crochet work. Now I put this correspondent in communication with a lady who had work to give, but the prices offered did not please her, and she refused it. Of course another and more sensible worker was only too glad of the chance. This is by way of preface. Neither of the people I have mentioned has even an elementary idea of the laws that govern supply and demand, and neither could possibly make home-work pay.

I will now turn to the businesses that can be made to pay—at home—provided they are worked by the right people,

Some few years ago I got into communication with a lady who wanted a worker to help her with blouse-making, and also work in her little cottage. What she told me seemed most interesting, for at the time of writing she had a flourishing blouse business, and two years before she told me she had never even cut out a blouse for herself. Chance led her to try it one day, and she found she made a success of it. A friend saw her handiwork, admired it, and asked her if she would make one for her also. The lady acquiesced, and her work gave great satisfaction. From that time orders began to come in. The blouse maker was a widow, living in a small cottage in Surrey, and somewhat remote from the chances of obtaining a blouse hand. She invoked my aid in connection with an Employment Bureau I was working, and thus I came to find out her history. could make a lot of money," she told me, " if I could only take half the orders I get, but I really want two or three capable hands, and I can't get them here. The actual sewing takes so much time (a great many blouses were hand-made entirely), and I should really like to devote myself to designing and cutting." In her hands she had really the material for forming a firstclass business. For from the cottage to a county town with a tiny window, with one blouse and a little lace on exhibit was not a great step, and with workers the profits soon increase. Of course she could have taken a salaried post, which her undoubted talents entitled her to do, but she preferred independence and a country life.

Here, then, is a case of a woman who, starting after she was thirty, yet managed to make money by a gift which had lain practically dormant.

Another woman I knew who, from making her own lingerie, dressing-gowns and so on, was asked to make them for her friends, and from that established quite a good connect on in a city in the West. Her work succeeded so well that she came up to London and developed it still further, and when I encountered her she was succeeding

beyond her wildest hopes. Then I knew another woman who started making lingerie for a few chance custome's, and from that she developed a business that enable1 her to rent a flat in an expensive part of the town; but her difficulty, she informed me, was that she could not get

workers sufficiently good to help her, and her orders were so numerous that to cope with them she had to give practically the whole of her time, "I could do much better than I do now," she wrote to me; "but really first-class workers are hard to get and unless I keep my standard up I shall los my customers, and I have a splendid rosnection of people who pay well."

Then, again, I know another woman who by devoting herself entirely to children's dressmaking, has made quite a success Nothing comes amiss to her—the making smocking, embroidery she can do it all There is a distinct demand for specialise work of this kind. Not long ago I had a letter from a lady who told me of the splendil opening there was in a wealthy Yorkship town for a worker of this kind. I am glal to say I was able to fill that niche, for a publishing this letter I found how much talent there was available that only wanted an opportunity for development. Over as over again I meet with the amateur who is making money by running a successful business at home and what woman has done, woman can do.

"THE OUIVER" GUILD OF HOME WORKERS

THE following are new members of the Guild:

52. Wanted, orders for chip-carving. (E. F. J., Canonbie.)

53. Invalid seeks orders for tatting, netting, crochet. Highly recommended, (M. G. M., Warminster.

54. Orders wanted for painting in oil or water-

55. Bead necklets (pendant designs), 18, 6d. to 28, 6d.; home-made Russian toffee, 18, 1b, (E. W., Godmanchester.)

56. Pen-painting on satin, delaine, or lawn; blouse strips, table centres, doilies, etc., to order many other things. Stencilling; fancy needlework.

(D. P., East Grinstead.)
57. Monogram cards for Christmas or birthdays. 3s. dozen; pen-painting on gauze, sitin, velvet, muslin, linen, etc.; table centres, doilies, blouse fronts, scarves, etc. (M. S., Needham Market.) 58. Thorough needlewoman (three certificates

for dress-cutting) would be glad of orders. (F. K., Twickenham.)

59 Invalid would be grateful for orders. Knitting: Shetland wool shawls, spencers, petti-coats, gloves, underwear. Fine lace work shawls, scarves, etc. Gentlemen's waistroats. (B. H.,

60. Orders wanted for knitting and crochet of any kind; excellent stockings with pretty turn over tops. (C. H., Oundle)

Gr. Orders wanted for pen-painting, table centres. dainty bags, etc. Make pretty Christmas presents (M. D., Cornwall.)

62. Widow would be grateful for knitting orders. Beautiful eider and Shetland shawls, 10s. and 15s. each, two yards square; also knitted petticoats (M. McK., Edinburgh.)

63. Orders wanted for knitting and crocket, crewel work, babies' garments, fancy articles for bazaars. (G. L., Eastbourne.)

64. Shadow muslin embroidery for bedspreads cushion covers, etc.; hairpin work crochet doilles. monograms on linen, etc. (H. L., H., Dorset)

RULES

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1. Any resourt was redoes not work for the trade or varu a living by her was
is eligible.
2. The annual subscription is one shilling.
3. A retister is kept in which the names and addresse
of all Guild members are inserted, together with particulars of the kind of work they indectake, or, if employes
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the kind of work they offer.
4. "Winifred" reserves the right of refusing membership to any applicant at her own discretion.
5. Each member of the Guild has a number, and in
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THE WIDOW'S ETERNAL MONUMENT

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dets. 158, oats. With the advent of Winter with its damp and chilly weather comes the plea for Fuel. One poor widow came to me this evening drenched through, pleading piteously for some coal to light a fire to dry her clothes. When there is an insufficiency of food and a scarcity of blankets, one cwt. of coal is a boon indeed. Many widows and cld people around have nothing beyond the 5/- pension to exist on; after 26 has been paid out for rent there is little left for food and clothing; coal to such is a luxury, the cost of which is 21/- a ton. Will you help to give a ton?

There is no indiscriminate giving here; every case is thoroughly enquired into before any help is given.

"What can I spare?" we say,
Ah, this and this from mine array
I shall not miss;
And here are crumbs to feed some hungry one,
They are just a cumbrance on my shelf.
And yet we read, Our Father gave His Son,
Our Master gave Himself.

The widow who gave two mites was a wonderful giver, for when she had given—there was nothing left. She might have said, "My two mites are much to me, but they will not make the treasury noticeably richer. I will keep them for my own need." Instead of which she kept her need and gave her money—all that she had—and Jesus built her an eternal monument when He said, "She cast in more than they all."

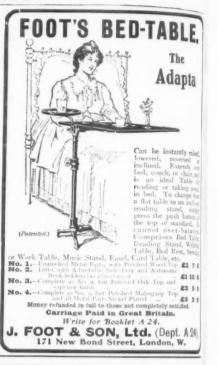
We hear the expression, "I will give my mite—will you?" "Yes," you say, "I will." Well, then our need will soon be supplied. There would be a surplus. How often we use the words with a kind of mock modesty, "I will give my mite." Why, the mite is a mighty thing, the mite is all,

Gifts may be sent either to the Editor of "The Quiver" or direct to me at above address.

Yours in His Happy Service,

FRANK SWAINSON.









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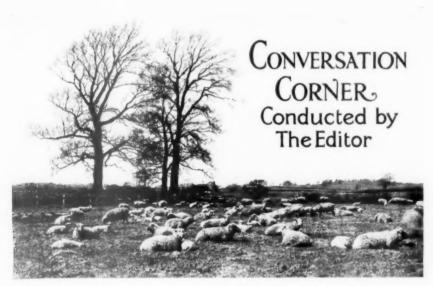
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Mention THE ORIVER.

HILL, E.C.



A Happy Christmas

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RS.

N presenting this Christmas Number to my readers, and wishing them a very happy Christmastide, 1 must offer my hearty congratulations and thanks to those who have helped to make my November number such a success. In response to my appeal, readers have mentioned the magazine to their friends, and everywhere there have been signs of new interest. As I write these lines it is too early to say what the total result will be; but I hope soon to be able to announce that my ten thousand new subscribers have been definitely secured.

The New Year

OF course, extra orders for one month will not help me much; but I am hoping that all who have bought THE QUIVER for the first time with the November number will go right on as permanent readers. I am sorry that, through pressure of Christmas matter, one or two of the regular features have had to be omitted from this issue. For instance, the second of the series on "My Life, and How I Face It" will appear in January (published December 20), and will give the story of a German governess who tried to carn her living alone and without friends, first in Ireland, and then in London.

The Author of "The Rosary"

SOME months ago I gave an article telling the true history of the beautiful lyric, "The Rosary," which was the foundation of Nevinson's beautiful song and Mrs. Barclay's popular story. A short time after the publication I had a long chat with Mr. Fred G. Winter, who, as the article explained, is the real author of "The Resary." The story he had to tell me was wonderful and pathetic in the extreme. I am not allowed to give those extra particulars for publication, but one day, surely, they will be given to the world. However, Mr. Winter has been good enough to allow me to publish a quite new poem written by him recently. It has the same measure and the same lift as "The Rosary," and, in my opinion, adds valuable internal evidence in favour of Mr. Winter's claim to the authorship of that great poem. This new lyric will be given in my January number.

00 A New Kind of School

SHOULD boys and girls be educated together? Should prizes be abolished? These are two of the questions dealt with in an interesting article by Miss Amy B. Barnard, L.L.A., in my January number. Miss Barnard has found a school where not only are boys and girls taught together, but where there are no prizes, no examinations, no marks-and children who are willing and eager to learn without any of the ordinary inducements! This is not a "freak "school, but a serious educational experiment, and the article on "A New Kind of School' should be read by all parents,



The Christmas Spirit

EVERY Christmas I make a special appeal for a few worthy charities that particularly want help at this time of the year. First of all, I would like to put in an earnest word for our own League of Loving Hearts. I hardly like to total up the funds received just now, but I know that there will have to be a great effort if we are to reach last year's total. Will members who have not subscribed kindly send me a shilling or more?

Dr. Barnardo's Homes

DR. BARNARDO'S are particularly in need of a helping hand just now. It is hard work to continue to provide for such a huge family, drawn from all parts of the Kingdom. I hope there will be a generous response to the appeal Mr. Baker is making,



The Helpless and Ailing

THE cry of the helpless and incurable is particularly pathetic. Last year I put in a word for the British Homes for Incurables, and readers were generous in their response. But, of course, last year's subscriptions will not pay this year's bills, so once again I ask the help of readers for that deserving in titution.



Saving Boys from Crime

VOUNG boys are no longer sent to prison for trivial offences, as was the case twenty years ago. A wonderful change is taking place in the treatment of juvenile offenders. It may be safely assumed that Mr. William Wheatley and those a sociated with him in the work of the St. Giles' Christian Mission have had no inconsiderable of law in this respect. Judges and magiscare of Mr. Wheatley and his Mission, instead

of committing them to prison, and the result Mr. Wheatley needs is most encouraging. financial support in this great undertaking and I have no doubt that readers will liberally respond.

The Widows and Children

IT is only necessary for me to call attention to the appeal by the Rev. Frank Swainson in our advertisement section. Mr. Swainson is doing a marvellous work in an exceptionally difficult parish, and deserves our support. The National Children's Home and Orphanage is an institution which, too, ought to make a very direct appeal to our hearts.

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Friendless and Fallen

AST year I mentioned the new Home opened at New Southgate, in connection with the London Female Preventive and Reformatory Institution. We have heard a great deal during the last year or two about the "White Slave Traffic." But here is an institution which for years has been quietly at work rescuing girls from moral peril; and such an effort as this, not the less effective because not sensationally boomed, ought to have our continuous help. I sha'll be pleased to forward sums received for this and other charities.



Presentation to Miss Weston

MISS WESTON'S numerous friends will be interested to hear that on Trafalgar Day she was presented with a portrait of Lord Nelson, after Abbott, R.A. and a painting of the Pattle of Trafa'gar, after Turner, R.A., together with a richly iEuminated address expressive of the intense admiration and appreciation felt by all classes for lar devoted work in the Navy.



Christmas Cards

WHAT to do with old Christmas cards is often a minor problem. I suggest that they be sent to Mos Little, Acton Turville, Chippenham, Wilts, who sells them, and with the proceeds supports three cots in the Children's

Points for Parents

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THE FAMILY INCOME MADE SECURE

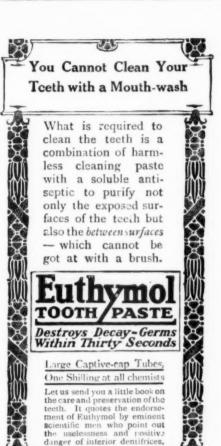
THE earnest wish of every Husband and Father is to leave at his death a provision that shall relieve his family from all monetary anxiety. Heedlessness of this subject is rare rowadays; the keen struggle for existence "rubs it in" to a man's mind. Yet many put off action and put it off again till it is too late.

How best to do this is a conundrum that has puzzled many a clever man. The subject may often have been in his mind and been as often dismissed, simply because he could not decide upon a really satisfactory method of making such a provision. The friend who could show him a sound and safe way of securing to his widow and his children a definite annual income would be a friend

Such a friend-to the man himself-to his wife-to his children, the writer claims to be. It cannot be too widely known that a secure and definite annual income for a widow and her children is provided by either of two policies issued by the "North British and Mercantile." These are the Twentieth Century Option Policy, and the Five Per Cent. Investment Policy, and their cost is so reasonable that many a reader could afford one which would give his relatives at his decease a certain income of £50 or £100 per annum. The policies admit of the income being commuted, in whole or in part, for a eash payment on a liberal scale, if circumstances make this useful to the survivors.

Space does not admit of entering into details, but we are sure that many will be wise enough to write for Booklets which clearly describe the merits and working of these remarkable policies. They can be obtained upon application—a post card will do—for Booklet No. 20 to the Life Manager, North British and Mercantile Insurance Company, 61 Threadneedle Street, London, E.C.

"The assurance of life is one of the most Christian things that I know; for what is it? It is taking the load that would crush one family and spreading it over twenty thousand families, so that a mere drop lights upon each instead of overwhelming torrent falling upon one. It seems to me a heautiful illustration of bearing one another's burdens. And therefore, let every young man entering upon life, every head of a family, whether high or low, set his house in order and assure his life,"—Rev. Dr. Comming.



FREE PROOF TUBE AND BOOKLET Dept. O.3. EUTHYMOL, 50 Beak St., London, W.



PLAYER'S NAVY CUT DE LUXE



2-OZ. AIR-TIGHT TIN



4-0Z. AIR-TIGHT TIN 2/4 IS A DEVELOPMENT OF THE ORIGINAL PLAYER'S NAVY CUT

Player's Navy Cut de Luxe is the outcome of many years experience and is probably the best Pipe Tobacco yet offered to the Public.

It is perfectly accurate to describe it as being manufactured from not only the best growths of Virginia, but from the selected leaves of those best growths.

PACKED ONLY IN 2-OZ. & 4-OZ. PATENT AIRTIGHT TINS.

JOHN PLAYER & SONS Nottingham.

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P341

"COMPANIONSHIP" CHRISTMAS

Short Stories written by Readers for Readers

Last year "Alison" asked her young Companions to send in some Christmas stories, and here are two of the efforts that were received. Not only Companions, but readers generally, will follow these efforts with interest

"AT EVENING TIME IT SHALL BE LIGHT"

By CHARLOTTE BROOKE WILLIAMS

THERE was an all-pervading stillness everywhere—a stillness that yet seemed full of voices somehow: voices from the long-ago, voices long hushed in the quiet of the grave, voices low and far away, yet clear and distinct.

The man sitting huddled in the armchair before the blazing fire was conscious of those voices. They spoke to him of the past, of the wife whom he had worshipped—and lost; of the son, wild and reckless, who had been exiled from his home by his stern, unforgiving parent—they had never met again since that day, and the man believed that his love for his son was dead.

But to-night, alone, with the crackling logs and the pathetic moaning of the wind around the old house, to-night—Christmas Eve—the heart of the father cried out, in his desolation, for his banished son, his Hugh.

The fire gradually sank lower—the flames grew less—but still the bowed figure did not move.

Somewhere in the house a door banged. A little later, a coal dropped noisily on the hearth, but the man never stirred.

Memory was doing her relentless work, and soon the hot difficult tears of a strong man fell.

Suddenly, the Christmas waits struck up outside; the old familiar melodies, full of associations, sweet and bitter, for the man crouching, lonely, before the dying fire.

The carols were ended, the singers had gone, when a single footstep crunched on the gravelwalk directly outside the window, and a low voice, musical, with a touch of hoarseness in it, commenced singing softly.

The man in the armchair sat up with a jerk. Who was that, singing that hymn of all hymns? Those lines were fraught with the memory of the bitterest moments of his life—when his beloved wife lay dying in his arms;

"Our life is but a fading dawn."

She had whispered it to him faintly. Then:

"Lead us, O Christ, when all is gone, Safe home at last."

And the utter peace on her wan white face, as

she had breathed the lines, had haunted him ever since. The singer had reached the words:

" And evening shadows never fall."

Ah! but they had fallen thickly upon him! Shadows of the deepest, darkest night; impenetrable shadows, which had blotted out his vision of God—and a stifled cry broke from his lips; "My wife! Oh, my wife!"

But there was no answer. The voices, which before had echoed all around him, were stilled and a greater loneliness pressed down upon him.

"Come back to me, Hugh, my son! I forgive you everything—only come back to me!" He unconsciously spoke aloud in his intense longing.

" Father, I am here!"

The man leapt to his feet, a wild look in his eyes. Had he gone mad? Was that Hugh's voice behind him?

From a shadowy corner of the old hall a tall figure strode towards him with outstretched hands and pleading eyes.

"Father, forgive me-I was all wrong!"

The man passed his hand over his face. No, it could not be true; he was the victim of an hallucination. He fancied he saw his son's face, heard his son's voice, but it was only a dream—only a dream! And he uttered a bitter groan.

"Father!" and Hugh gripped his shoulders.
"Father, don't you know who it is—Hugh?"

"Hugh!" came in a whisper. "My Hugh is it indeed my Hugh? Oh, my God, I thank Thee! Thou hast been very gracious to me!"

He seized his son's hands, and gazed into his face, as if still doubting the evidence of his senses—then:

"Hugh, my boy, will you forgive me?"
"Forgive you, father! What have I to for-

give? It is I who ask you for forgiveness!"

"I spoke harsh words to you when I should have given you good counsel—I banished you from my home when I should have kept you near me and protected you. Ah, my boy, forgive my unforgivingness!"

The tears welled up in Hugh's eyes, as he said impu'sively: "Dad, it was every bit my fault!

THE QUIVER

I had no right to behave as I did—I was just as wrong as I con'd be. Can we, may we, start all over again? Dad, it will be Christmas Day to morrow. She would rejoice to know that we began afresh on that day—the day she—she died!" an uncontrollable quiver sounding in his voice.

The father laid his hands on the young fellow's shoulders, and Hugh could see his lips trembling as he said: "For her sake, we will begin all over again, Hugh! God grant that we, too, may be led, 'when all is gone, safe home at last."

CHARLOTTE BROOKE WILLIAMS (age 2) years), Streatham, S.W.



ROBBIE'S CHRISTMAS

By MARJORIE HEARD

CHRISTMAS morning dawned bright and frosty, and the December sun shone full into a little boy's bedroom. It was cold, certainly, and Robbie shivered as he pattered to the window and clambered on to a chair, curling his little cold feet under him, and peeped under the blind.

The fairy scene in the garden filled him with

Every tree and shrub was laden with beautiful crystals which sparkled and glistened in the sunshine!

Surely this was the work of fairies!

Robbie was still gazing at the lovely scene below him when his mother entered the room.

"Mummy," said Robbie, "just look at the garden! Have the fairies made it so pretty for us?"

"I think a fairy named Jack Frost has had a great deal to do with it," replied Mrs. Raymond. "But come, Robbie, make haste and get dressed. There are lots of presents downstairs for you on the dining-room table."

Robbie felt so excited to get downstairs that somehow all the buttons went wrong, and several times mother had to come to the rescue.

However, by breakfast-time he was ready, and he slid down the banisters at a terrific pace, which would have terrified his mother had she seen him.

Arrived at the dining room door he stepped inside.

Oh! the pile of parcels all addressed to Robbic!
"I don't know which to open first," he cried

"I don't know which to open first," he cried excitedly, as his mother came forward with a pair of scissors.

"Open the first which comes," suggested his father.

So, with mother's help in cutting the string, the first parcel was opened, and it contained, to Robbie's delight, a box of beautiful soldiers.

Just as the last parcel was opened, Mary appeared with the breakfast.

"Oh, Mary!" cried Robbie, rushing towards

her as she came in, "let me give you a Christmas kiss."

"Just wait one minute, sir, while I put down the tray," replied Mary; and then he put his fat little arms round her neck and gave her a truly Christmas-like hug.

Mary went back to the kitchen with a beaming face, telling the cook that she had had "a Christmas kiss from the little master."

After breakfast, when Robbie's excitement had somewhat abated, his father said: "Come here, sonny. I want to speak to you."

Robbie obediently climbed on to his father's knee and laid his curiy head on his shoulder.

"We'll, Robbie," Mr. Raymond began, "you're very pleased with the nice presents you've had this Christmas, aren't you?"

"Yes, daddy," said Robbie emphatically,

"And I suppose you won't care for your old toys much now, will you?"

The curly head shook decidedly.

"Well, do you know that there are lots of little boys and girls who haven't a single toy this Christmas?"

Robbie looked incredulous.

"Yes, Robbie, there are hundreds of boys and girls in London who would be giad to receive an article of clothing or some food as a Christmas present. Wouldn't you like to help some of these poor children?"

"Oh, yes, daddy, I would. But how can I?" asked Robbie.

"If you like to put together all the toys you don't want, they shall be sent to some Union, who will distribute them as they think best."

"I'd like to do that," said Robbie.

"Very well. Collect the toys, and they shall be sent," replied Mr. Raymond.

Robbie ran off and put together a large pile which were duly sent; and he went to bed that night feeling none the less happy because he had made others happy by his gifts.

MARJORDE HEARD (age 14 years), Southgate, N. S'MC

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"THE QUIVER" AS A GIFT

A Practical Scheme for the Christmas Season

LAST year I made the suggestion that readers should present The QUIVER as a Christmas gift to their friends—not the bound volume, but the current issue fresh from the publishers every month. A number of subscribers took advantage of the suggestion, and The QUIVER, coming as a token of friendship and regard, was much appreciated by the recipients.

For the benefit of readers generally, I

repeat my suggestion.

Let me explain just how it is done. Your part is simply to fill in the form given below, and send, with a postal order for 6s. 6d., to Messrs. Cassell and Co. Immediately on receipt of this, our publishers will make arrangements with a local newsagent or bookseller to deliver to your friend, as soon as it is published each month, a copy of The Quiver.

In addition, they will send to your friend a large handsome Christmas card,

setting forth that you have made arrangements for them to be supplied with a copy of THE QUIVER each month. On this card is a beautiful reproduction, by the three-colour process, of a charming picture of an Italian scene by Mr. E. W. Haslehust.

At the same time as dispatching this to your friend, our publishers will send you a replica of the card, confirming the arrangements that have been made in accordance with your desire.

When to Send

Send your subscription in as soon as possible, as there is a strong probability of the Christmas Number running out of print. The Christmas card will be sent immediately—or withheld till nearer Christmas if the donor wishes it.

The subscription starts from the November number—the first of the new

XMAS GIFT

volume.

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To Messrs. Cassell & Co., Itd.,

La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.

Please make arrangements to supply "THE QUIVER" for One Year (commencing with the November No.) to

(MR., MRS.,)

for which I enclose Postal Order for 6s, 6d, 6g, if Foreign or Colonia). It is understood that the Special Christmas Card shall be sent to both my friend and myself.

Signed (MR., MRS.,)



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£50 Prize Baby

Mrs. ETHEL HODGE, of Trafalgar Crescent, Bridlington. Yorks, writes:

"He is a fine, healthy, and strong boy, as shown by the photo, having been entirely fed on your 'Patent' Barley and Milk from three months old. He was entered in the 'Daily Sketch' competition of last year, and came out top in his division, thereby winning a prize of £50."

Babies fed on cow's milk diluted with Barley Water made from

S "PATENT"

always thrive wonderfully. Perfect nutrition, sound sleep, and freedom from digestive troubles are some of the happy results of adopting this diet.

Send for Free Booklet, "Advice to Mothers."

ROBINSON & CO., LTD., LONDON



ISH BATHS

All the delights and benefits of every form of Hot Air, Vapour, Perfumed and Medicated Baths can be enjoyed privately, economically, and with absolute safety in your

Our Patent Folding Cabinets embrace every desirable feature and possess several exclusive advantages, such as—Efficient and Absolutely Safe Outside Heater: Adjustable Seat; Heat Regulator: the Bather is not fastened by the neck to the Cabinet; Exit is easy and the cabinet; Exit is easy and Perfect Hygiens.

Prices from 35/-. Write for "SATH BOOK," No. 24. J. FOOT & SON, Ltd., (Dept. B 24), 171 New Bond St., London, W.

C. BRANDAUER & Co., LTD., CIRCULAR-POINTED PENS.



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Black Coney Seal. Tie, 70 in. -

Muff to match

Wide Wrap -14 -Muff to match 8 -Toque to match

Cash renunded if not suited.

Patterns of Coat and Costume Fabrics and Fur and Fashion Book Free,

HARTLEY & CO., 17A STANNINGLEY LEEDS

LET'S GO SHOPPING

A Homely Article Dealing with the Question of the Hour

By MARY ODELL

NOBODY likes shopping alone. That is one reason why shopping by reat reason why shopping by post has become so very popular. Even in the choosing of very popular. one's Christmas cards—where personal taste should count for everything—one is almost abjectly de-sirous of the counsel of a friend.

Asked the other day whether it was equally correct to send either autograph or printed cards, I was constrained to turn out my own newly bought stock for Miss Inquisitive's immediate inspection. Twenty-five—only twenty-five!—private cards, with my name and address cunningly blazoned thereon in gold; and these, I explained, were for the rather stiff people among my friends.

One's Special Fancy in Cards

The other cards, picked singly, number some-thing over sixty, and I must confess that they are my special delight—each one being chosen just to some real person.

"Mt some real person.
"Why, they're every one Tuck's!" said my friend, lifting her eyebrows in surprise. "Don't you like a change?"
"Yes." said I, "and I keep to Tuck's for that very reason. They provide every change that heart could desire—the variety is endless, the desired that they have be found anywhere. signs the most lovely that can be found anywhere, and it always is a puzzle to me how they gather together such a charming treasury of bewitching little mottoes every year."

For the Prospective Bride

"Oh, that reminds me," said my friend (though why it should have done so I am puzzled to ex-plain), "I do so want you to advise me what present I can give to a girl who is getting married

in January. Do you think I might give one nice present to cover the two occasions?"
"Put the matter to yourself," I suggested. "If you were getting married in January, wouldn't you like to have a Christmas and wedding gift rolled into one? The thing I myself should most ache into one? The thing I myself should most ache either to give or to accept would be china or crystal—such a clean, sparkling, joyous sort of gift, and so much to look at for one's money! Just spend a minute in writing to Messrs. Ritchie & Co., Stoke-on-Trent, asking for a copy of their beautifully illustrated catalogue. You will be ever so much wiser about the real prices of exquisite china and glass when you have looked through those fascinating pages."

"Now tell me what you are buying yourself," demanded Miss Inquisitive, assuming that she had demanded Miss Inquisitive, assuming that she had

demanded Miss Inquisitive, assuming that she had buttonholed me for at least half an hour.

Just Sober Usefuls

"Sober and unsentimental 'usefuls," said I, "Swan' pens for one thing; three whole pens—no less."
"Extravagant!" she exclaimed,

"Not at all. I shall get back the value ten times over in good wishes, because, you see, there's never any doubt as to the reliability of a 'Swan.' Do you

know that the 'Swan' people (Messrs, Mabie, Te & Co., So High Holborn, London) are so sus the life of their pens and of the little troubles will give to users that they offer to maintain: one of their 'Swans' in first class order during whole of its working career, cleaning, adjusfilling, and doing everything (except replace breakages) quite free of charge? That's a graidea, isn't it? It gives one such confidence in a ing a 'Swan' pen."

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A Golden Feather

"Chocolates, too, I see, and opened; maste?" And little Miss Inquisitive scan waited permission before testing the delicious of the Golden Feather Boisselier chocolates, wh as it happened, had been given to myself as a fi taste of Christmas. Golden Feather is a type the very highest grade of checolate obtains and, while being of English manufacture, as rivals the best Continental makes, and is far coming extremely popular.

Playing at Being Rich

"Now let us be giddy," said little Miss Intive, "and play at being rich. Benson's catalogues there, and they are also worth looking at, even if one's purse isn't

"I always make a practice of buying just nice bit of jewellery every year," said I confisselfish, I will confess that I generally keep its self. It's always a puzzle to me why the awa 'lone woman'-who thinks nothing of spenis money on hats and gowns that cannot out latseason-should so very much grudge buying b self a ring or brooch or watch that will last all time. And one certainly cannot beat Benson's jewellery of the lasting sort. Their workman's is really first class—a thing to be proud of: one can always rely upon their excellent good to and their fine progressive qualities. Benst jewellery catalogue is far and away more interes ing than the average modern novel. If your thinking of purchasing anything in their way was to them for yourself, addressing to J. W. Bensa Limited, 62 and 64 Ludgate Hill, E.C., and catalogue will be sent you post free."

When One Can Afford It

"There's not many of us can come up to be Winterbothams after all," said little Miss Inquis tive with a sigh. "I was there only yesterday and Ena Winterbotham is just crazy with delictorer the gorgeous 'Daimler twenty' that she at her husband are buying as a joint gift to en other. I do wonder sometimes, Mary, whitheyou or I will either of us ever have such a luxury Ena had a most fascinating catalogue, shows all the parts of the 'Daimler twenty,' and one couldn't hear about the new car without feeling sure that it is, as Ena says, an absolute beaut

possessing all the advantages that a woman most cares for. After all, it's women who really buy the cars, isn't it?"

The Toothsome Biscuit

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feeling beauty "Come back, dear," said I, "and let us rejoice ourselves with thinking about the things that we really can afford, and that will give us no end of pleasure whether we buy taem for our own use or for Christmas gifts. I have opened one 'drum' of Maciarlane Lang's Assorted Shortbread, and while we are seeing which sort we like best we can look at the outsides of some of their other specialties. Their Christmas cakes are just ravishing; one cannot see the 'Waverley' and 'Rosbeld' and 'Japanese' cakes without feeling hungry. Perhaps the tins are a little less of a temptation, being so closely sealed—but I am not quite sure. Certainly the golf-bag tin and the motor-car are about as attractive as could be; and these are all within the reach of the average purse, and also are easily obtainable from one's very own grocer."

A Capital Christmas Pudding

"Buy how much one will," said my talkative little friend, "there always remains no end of coking to be done at home. It's rather a good thing from my point of view, for I revel in pastry-making and pudding-making, too. By the by, I have brought along the recipe you asked for—the one that delicious pudding we had last Christmas. Day was made from. Hand it on, if you like, to any of your friends. It's just capital."

Day was made from. Hand it on, if you like, to any of your friends. It's just capital."

So here is the recipe copied from Miss Inquisitive's slip of paper: Take three-quarters of a pound of flour, two teaspoonfuls of Borwick's baking-powder, two cunces of breadcrumbs, one and a half pounds of suet, two pounds of raisins, one pound of currants, ten ounces of sugar, two ounces of almonds, one pound of mixed candied peel, salt and spice to taste. Mix the ingredients well together and add six eggs, well beaten, and three-quarters of a pint of milk; divide in two, and boil for eight hours.

A "Womany" Time

"What a 'womany' time we are having," said my vivacious friend, as she toasted her toes on the fender, and looked round the room that was strewn with the sundries before mentioned. "If I had only known I would have brought along my share of the entertainment in the way of dress patterns.

"I am treating myself to a scrumptions wrapcoat, and am getting it from Hartley's, the Vorkshire Warehouse, Leeds. Of course, I have dealt
with them for years, and know them to be
thoroughly reliable. Wait till you see me in my
'Berlin' motor coat, and you will be envious of
the style and value one gets from Hartley's. I
have chosen the 'Premier' reversible blanket cloth
for my own coat, though there were dozens of
other cloths nearly as attractive. Then I am
getting a couple of blouses from them, made of
their 'Sylkord'—such a lovely fabric, only
1s. 3d. per yard. The ready-to-wear blouses are
5s., and are smart as can be.

Where to Get Silk-and-Wool Wincey

"Then, again, I am busy making two of the sweetest little frecks you ever saw as special sifts for Ena Winterbotham's twins. They are of Lawrie and Smith's silk-and-wool wincey, and I am smocking them with palest rose silk. If I have

BABY RESTS AFTER BATH



CUTICURA SOAP

Because of its extreme purity, delicate emollient properties and refreshing fragrance, it is unrivaled for baby's tender skin. Assisted by Cuticura Ointment it is equally effective in the treatment of heat rashes, itchings, irritations and chafings.

Cutleura Soap and Cutleura Cintment are sold throughout the world. Send post-card to nearest depot for free sample of each with 32-page book; Newbery, 27, Charterhouse Sq. London; R. Towns & Co., Sydney, N. S. W.; Lennon, Ltd., Cape Town, Muller, Maclean & Co., Calcutta and Bombay; Potter Drug & Chem. Corp., Boston, U. S. A.

97 Men who shave and shampon with Cutleura Soap will find it best for skin and scalp.

time afterwards I shall make nighties for little Phyll of the plain wincey. There's nothing so durable and so well-behaved in the wash-tub. It isn't expensive either, costing from 10½d. a yard. This season's patterns are delightful, and Messrs. Lawrie and Smith, Ayr, can be relied upon to send a splendid selection when requested."

The Latest on the Market-"Kilspindie"

"Speaking of warm clothes," said I, "have you heard about this famous new underwear and hosiery—the Kilspindie? Their manufactures are simply perfect, so finely and evenly knit, and of such deliciously soft silky texture. The Kilspindie things are all purest of the pure wool, and are wonderfully inexpensive. You see they supply direct, and so there are no middleman's profits. Their catalogue is really well worth sending for. One can get it by return post from The Kilspindie Hosiery Company, Haddington, Scotland.

"Chilprufe" Garments for Little Ones

"There's the Chilprufe garments, too," said I, suddenly remembering some bonnie little "petties" bought a month ago in view of the "shortening" of an adorable baby boy, which ceremony is to be performed on Christmas Day. "Chilprufe wool is treated by some serret process, which renders it absolutely unshrinkable, and keeps it a lovely pearly white colour. The Chilprufe catalogue—which one can get post free from the Chilprufe Manufacturing Company, Leicester—contains all the information one could wish for.

The Best Food for a Delicate Baby

"I can't help being specially interested in the little 'adorable' who is to wear the petticoats," I continued; "he was such a fragile mite up to the end of the first month. Then his mother was obliged to wean him, and as the doctor recommended Allen and Hanbury's Foods above all others, his little lordship was 'put upon' them. It's lovely to see him grow.

others, his little lordship was 'put upon' them. It's lovely to see him grow.
"Did you notice, by the way, that in the National Physical Welfare £1,000 Competition, organised last summer by the Daily Sketch newspaper, it was an 'Allenbury's' baby who won the first prize of all? He represented the absolute ideal of healthy babyhood."

Getting Back to the "Usefuls"

"We have wandered a good way off from the 'usefuls,'" said little Miss Inquisitive, "but I want to get back to them just for two minutes before I go. I have one special 'useful' myself in course of purchase, a real beauty, in the shape of a Zorst easy-working vacuum cleaner. It was the Zorst that made such a sensation at the Ideal Home Exhibition. Mine is one of the 30s. 6d. cleaners (model No. 2), and is sufficiently large for the average house. It is claimed that the Zorst will do more work and last ever so much longer than many higher-priced vacuum cleaners."

The Last, but Not the Least

"That reminds me," said I, "that I also have one more 'useful' in view—an Adapta Table, which I am buying for a man-invalid. You know how one fidgets about over the purchase of things for a man, especially if he is bedridden and a trifle querulous. I have worried over this friend's gift every Christmas for years, and have always ended in sending him a new book, generally to

hear that my gift had been duplicated. This year I sent to J. Foot and Sons, Limited, 171 New Bod Street, London, for their catalogue, telling all about the Adapta Table; and I have quite decided that one of these delightfully accommodatic bed-tables will prove an ideal gift for my fried?

Something Good for a Finish

"I suppose we have gone over everything," sailittle Miss Inquisitive; "everything, at least, accept those delicious old stand-bys that do so must on make Christmas. J. S. Fry and Sons' chocolass for instance. Christmas wouldn't be Christmas in me if I didn't have a real hunt round to see whe this famous old house is producing in the war novelties. Last year I had one of their link têle-à-têle tea-sets given me, packed full of the since its original contents disappeared. This we I am buying a few dozens of their smaller novelm to distribute among the little folks, and just cobig beautiful box, with kingfisher and iris decortion. The bird has real feathers, and he looked scunning that I couldn't possibly resist him."

Not All in One Basket

"All that you say of J. S. Fry and Sons I campeat with enthusiasm, applying the same to Cadbu Brothers," I replied, laughing. "My affection have always been closely entangled by the dependent of the 'factory in a garden,' and I simply be to buy chocolates that have been made and pade by happy workers in such happy conditions, must exist in that bonnie place. So we will see go our own way, and make what happy exchange are convenient. I am always glad to reconcept the collection of these well-known makes.

A Little Bit of Vanity

"And maybe I will confess to one more prochase," I said, by way of a finish, "seeing that" only to you. But I'll only whisper about it all will not tell you for whom it is intended. Perhapit is for myself—who knows? I will go no farher than to say that it is a large-size bottle d Lockyer's Hair Restorer, which cost me only is, od., and which will make somebody look a god six years younger than she does to day. Her hair has been fading for years, and is now greing rapidly. There really is nothing like Lockyer's for cleansing the scalp, brightening the hair, is storing its colour and tone, and giving new life to it. Yes, that is just the word I think most appropriate—new life. You, little Miss Inquistive, had better make a note of Lockyer's to You'll need it yourself before you are ten year older."

Only the Tilt of a Hat

She twisted her head inquiringly and pushed back her hat to get a view, in my mirror, of he rather thick, reddish brown hair (the very coke that fades most quickly).

that fades most quickly).

"Not just yet," said I, "but if you don't mind, dear, I'll give you your own special Chrismasgift in advance, right away this minute. Don't you know that you are wearing a love of a har and that its whole effect is lost just for the want a 'Fitzall' bandeau? Wait, now, and I will fit one for you, and you shall do the rest of you shopping happy in the consciousness that, with the aid of my sixpenny-halfpenny 'Fitzall,' you are looking your very best."

This year New Bond telling all quite de ommodative my friend."

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